

cents

THE

September 1918

THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE



Beginning "The Cup of Fury"
a new novel
by RUPERT HUGHES

Cream of Wheat

The
Food
you
never
tire of

Painted by Edw. V. Brewer for Cream of Wheat Co.

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"I have an exclusive agreement for twenty-five years with the Victor to make records of my voice. The records made by the Victor process are far superior in quality of tone, natural reproduction, and in every detail—to those made by any other process in the world."

Luis Yáñez

"I am delighted to contribute a word of appreciation in favor of the Victor, and congratulate myself that my selections are brought before the public in so admirable a manner, by means of its wonderful merit."

Stravinsky

"As any true artist must realize, it is of great benefit to 'sit in the audience' as it were, and be the critic at one's own performance. In this way I have learned a great deal from listening to my records on the Victrola and can truly state that it has been my best teacher."

Galli-Curci

"I believe that the process by which the Victor Records are made is the most perfect of all methods of voice reproduction. I have made records exclusively for the Victor since February 1910 and my present contract does not expire until February 1938."

J. D. Compton

"I have found Victor Records really wonderful reproductions of my singing."

Ruth Millich

Who knows more about music than the world's greatest artists!

What they think of the Victor

When selecting a musical instrument for your home, wouldn't you value the opinions of the world's greatest artists? Wouldn't you like to benefit by what they think of it?

Certainly no one is better qualified to judge a musical instrument! They know music. Their life-work is music. And what they say about the Victrola is of the utmost importance.

They not only endorse the Victrola, but they show their unbounded confidence in it by making Victor Records exclusively.

There are Victor dealers everywhere, and they will gladly play any music you wish to hear and demonstrate the various styles of the Victor and Victrola — \$12 to \$950. Saenger Voice Culture Records are invaluable to vocal students — ask to hear them.

Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N. J., U. S. A.

Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

Importance Notice. Victor Records and Victor Machines are scientifically coordinated and synchronized in the process of manufacture, and their use, one with the other, is absolutely essential to a perfect reproduction.

New Victor Records demonstrated at all dealers on the 1st of each month

"Victrola" is the Registered Trade-mark of the Victor Talking Machine Company designating the products of this Company only.

Victor Supremacy

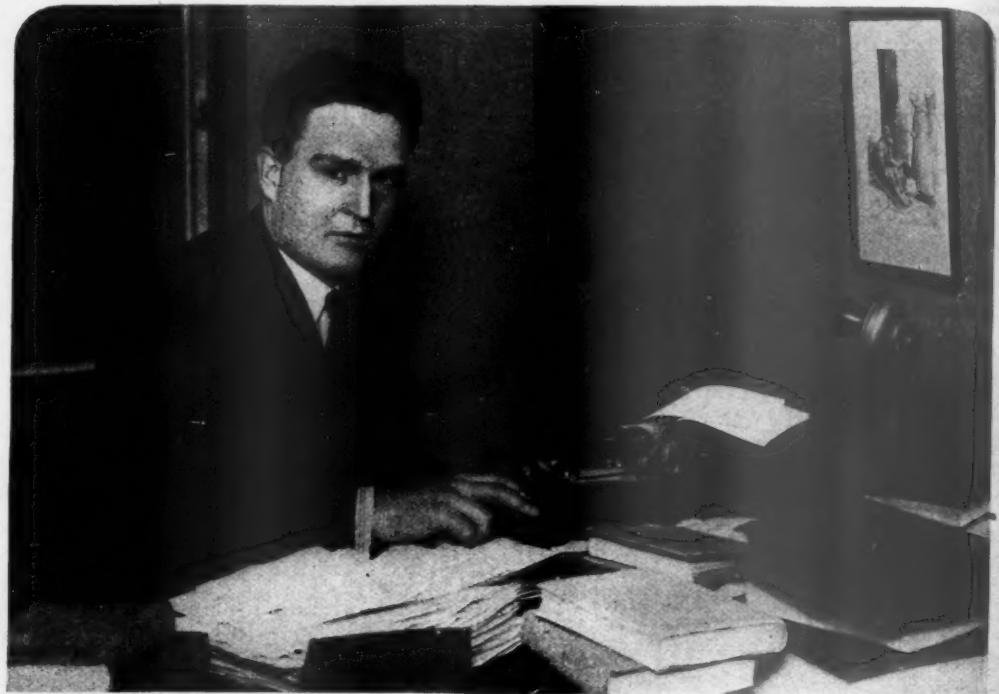
"I would like to express my delight at renewing my contract with the Victor Talking Machine Company for ten years more."

"During my extensive travels I have had such a vivid illustration of the great work you are doing for the world that it is with the deepest feeling that I say I'm proud to be a part of such a great work."

Alma Gluck

To insure Victor quality, always look for the famous trademark, "His Master's Voice." It is on all products of the Victor Talking Machine Company.





Photograph copyrighted by Underwood & Underwood.

BRUCE BARTON, *dealer in common sense*

EVERYTHING Bruce Barton writes gets a "great rise" out of folks. This is because Barton has a wonderful faculty for writing what is already half formed in the minds of his readers. People pick up his editorials, read them, and recognize them as an expression of what they themselves have been "getting around to."

You know what a norm is. A norm is a pattern, a model, a type. Bruce Barton is a sort of norm among human beings. He is typical of the human race. He is the most natural, rational-minded creature you ever saw —nothing crazy or eccentric about him. He never puts on airs, never writes except in the language all men know.

As one of his closest friends said not long ago: "If I invented a new device which I thought was useful to mankind, I would make every effort to get Barton to write my advertising. He would come nearer expressing the average man's need of the device than anybody I know. He would write what the millions would say if they could express themselves."

Bruce Barton is able to talk to the millions because he knows how to talk for the millions.

Bruce Barton's Editorials

The Most American—Most Sensible—Best Written—Best Liked Editorials ever published in the United States will appear hereafter exclusively in—

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

The first one is in this issue, on page 25. That page will be Bruce Barton's page hereafter. Read his common sense talks there each month.

"How I Save 51% on Typewriters"

An Expert Buyer's Statement

"Formerly the typewriters used in our office were priced at \$100 each. Now we buy Olivers at \$49. This saving of half means a great deal to us because we use so many machines. If any typewriter is worth \$100, it is this Oliver Nine, which we buy direct from the maker. After using Olivers we will never go back to \$100 machines. It is pure waste."

Among Our Customers Are:

United States Steel Corporation
Montgomery Ward & Company
Baldwin Locomotive Works
Pennsylvania Railroad
Lord & Thomas
Columbia Graphophone Co.
Bethlehem Steel Co.
National Cloak & Suit Company
New York Edison Co.
Cinnett, Peabody & Co.
National City Bank of New York.
Hart, Schaffner & Marx
Encyclopedia Britannica
American Bridge Co.
Otis Elevator Company
Diamond Match Co.
Fore River Ship Building Corporation
Boy Scouts of America
Corn Products Refining Company
Boston Elevated Railway

Was
\$100

OLIVER Typewriters
Over 600,000 Sold

Now
\$49

THE Oliver Typewriter Company now sells direct. It has discarded old and wasteful ways. Formerly we had 15,000 salesmen and agents. We maintained expensive offices in 50 cities. These and other costly practices amounted to \$51, which the purchaser had to pay.

Our new way saves this \$51 and so we sell brand new Oliver Nines for \$49.

This is the exact \$100 machine—not a change has been made. Such is our \$2,000,000 guarantee.

The entire facilities of The Oliver Typewriter Company are devoted exclusively to the manufacture and distribution of Oliver Typewriters.

Free Trial

Merely mail us the coupon and we will send you an Oliver for five days' free trial. Try it at your office or at home. If you decide to keep it, pay us at the rate of \$3 per month. If you return it, we will gladly refund the transportation charges. Old machines are accepted in exchange at fair valuation.

We hope to be able to maintain the \$49 price. But, if the cost of materials and

labor continues to go up, we may be forced to increase this price. We do not wish to. We do not expect to. But we advise you to act now to be certain of getting your Oliver Nine at \$49.

The Oliver Nine has the standard keyboard. So any operator may turn to it without the slightest hesitation. And it has a dozen other features which attract. It is greatly simplified in construction, having 2000 fewer parts. It is noted for its freedom from trouble, great durability and easy operation.

Why Be Wasteful?

Whether you use 1 typewriter or 100, this new Oliver plan saves you half.

No machine does better work. No typewriter is speedier. None are more satisfactory in the long run than the Oliver Nine.

All this you can know for yourself very easily. You are your own salesman and decide for yourself. Read the coupon. Note how simple our plan is. Then mail it today for either a free trial Oliver or our amazing book entitled "The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy." With the latter we send an illustrated catalog describing the Oliver in detail.

"Which for you? Check one or the other item on the coupon now.

Canadian Price \$62.65

The Oliver Typewriter Company
115C Oliver Typewriter Bldg. Chicago, Ill.

*Save
Half*

Mail
Today

THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER COMPANY

115C Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

Ship me a new Oliver Nine for five days' free inspection. If I keep it, I will pay \$49 at the rate of \$3 per month. The title to remain in you until fully paid for.

My shipping point is This does not place me under any obligation to buy. If I choose to return the Oliver, I will ship it back at your expense at the end of five days.

Do not send a machine until I order it. Mail me your book, "The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy," your de luxe catalog and further information.

Name

Street Address

City State

How I Improved My Memory In One Evening

The Amazing Experience of Victor Jones

"Of course I place you! Mr. Addison Sims of Seattle.

"If I remember correctly—and I do remember correctly—Mr. Burroughs, the lumberman, introduced me to you at the luncheon of the Seattle Rotary Club three years ago in May. This is a pleasure indeed! I haven't laid eyes on you since that day. How is the grain business? And how did that amalgamation work out?"

The assurance of this speaker—in the crowded corridor of the Hotel McAlpin—compelled me to turn and look at him, though I must say it is not my usual habit to "listen in" even in a hotel lobby.

"He is David M. Roth, the most famous memory expert in the United States," said my friend Kennedy, answering my question before I could get it out. "He will show you a lot more wonderful things than that, before the evening is over."

And he did.

As we went into the banquet room the toastmaster was introducing a long line of the guests to Mr. Roth. I got in line and when it came my turn, Mr. Roth asked, "What are your initials, Mr. Jones, and your business connection and telephone number?" Why he asked this, I learned later, when he picked out from the crowd the 60 men he had met two hours before and called each by name without a mistake. What is more, he named each man's business and telephone number, for good measure.

I wont tell you all the other amazing things this man did except to tell how he called back, without a minute's hesitation, long lists of numbers, bank clearings, prices, lot numbers, parcel post rates and anything else the guests gave him in rapid order.

When I met Mr. Roth again—which you may be sure I did the first chance I got—he rather bowled me over by saying in his quiet, modest way:

"There is nothing miraculous about my remembering anything I want to remember, whether it be names, faces, figures, facts or something I have read in a magazine.

"You can do this just as easily as I do. Anyone with an average mind can learn quickly to do exactly the same things which seem so miraculous when I do them.

"My own memory," continued Mr. Roth, "was originally very faulty. Yes it was—a really poor memory. On meeting a man I

would lose his name in thirty seconds, while now there are probably 10,000 men and women in the United States, many of whom I have met but once, whose names I can call instantly on meeting them."

"That is all right for you, Mr. Roth," I interrupted, "you have given years to it. But how about me?"

"Mr. Jones," he replied, "I can teach you the secret of a good memory in one evening. This is not a guess, because I have done it with thousands of pupils. In the first of seven simple lessons which I have prepared for home study, I show you the basic principle of my whole system and you will find it—not hard work as you might fear—but just like playing a fascinating game. I will prove it to you."

He didn't have to prove it. His Course did; I got it the very next day from his publishers, the Independent Corporation.

When I tackled the first lesson, I suppose I was the most surprised man in forty-eight states to find that I had learned in about one hour—how to remember a list of one hundred words so that I could call them off forward and back without a single mistake.

That first lesson stuck. And so did the other six.

Read this letter from C. Louis Allen, who at 32 years became president of a million dollar corporation, the Pyrene Manufacturing Company of New York, makers of the famous fire extinguisher:

"Now that the Roth Memory Course is finished, I want to tell you how much I have enjoyed the study of this most fascinating subject. Usually these courses involve a great deal of drudgery, but this has been nothing but pure pleasure all the way through. I have derived much benefit from taking the course of instruction and feel that I shall continue to strengthen my memory. That is the best part of it. I shall be glad of an opportunity to recommend your work to my friends."

Mr. Allen didn't put it a bit too strong. The Roth Course is priceless! I can absolutely count on my memory now. I can call the name of most any man I have met before—and I am getting better all the time. I can remember any figures I wish to remember. Telephone numbers come to mind instantly, once I have filed them by Mr. Roth's easy method. Street addresses are just as easy.

The old fear of forgetting (you know what that is) has vanished. I used to be "scared stiff" on my feet—because I wasn't sure. I couldn't remember what I wanted to say.

Now I am sure of myself, and confident, and "easy as an old shoe" when I get on my feet at the club, or at a banquet, or in a business meeting, or in any social gathering.

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of it all is that I have become a good conversationalist—and I used to be as silent as a sphinx when I got into a crowd of people who knew things.

Now I can call up like a flash of lightning most any fact I want right at the instant I need it most. I used to think a "hair trigger" memory belonged only to the prodigy and genius. Now I see that every man of us has that kind of a memory if he only knows how to make it work right.

I tell you it is a wonderful thing, groping around in the dark for so many years to be able to switch the big searchlight of your mind and see instantly everything you want to remember.

This Roth Course will do wonders for your office.

Since we took it up you never hear one in our office say "I guess" or "I think" was about so much" or "I forgot that now" or "I can't remember" or "I can't look up his name." Now they are all there with the answer—like a shot.

Have you ever heard of "Memory Course Smith"? Real name H. Q. Smith, Director of the Multigraph Sales Company Ltd., in Montreal. Here is just a bit of a letter of his that I saw last week:

"Here is the whole thing in a nutshell: Roth has a most remarkable Memory Course. It is simple, and easy as falling off a log. You can learn in about one hour a day of practice anything you don't care who he is—can improve his memory 100% in a week and 1,000% in six months."

My advice to you is don't wait another minute. Send to Independent Corporation for Mr. Roth's amazing course and see the wonderful memory you have got. Your friends in increased power will be amazed.

VICTOR JONES

While Mr. Jones has chosen the story for his account of his experience and that of others in the Roth Memory Course, he has used only that portion personally to the President of the Independent Corporation, who hereby verifies the accuracy of Jones' story in all its particulars.

Send No Money

So confident is the Independent Corporation in the Roth Memory Course, that once you have an opportunity to see in your own home how easy it is to double, yes, triple your memory power in a few short hours, that they are willing to send the course on free examination.

Don't send any money. Merely mail a coupon or write a letter and the course will be sent, all charges prepaid. Once. If you are not entirely satisfied, return it back any time within five days and receive it and you will owe nothing.

On the other hand, if you are as are the thousands of other men and women who have used the course, send \$5 in full payment. You take nothing but a coupon now before this remarkable course is withdrawn.

FREE EXAMINATION COUPON

Independent Corporation

Division of Business Education
Dept. 369 119 W. 40th St. New York
Publishers of *The Independent* (and Harper's Magazine)

Please send me the Roth Memory Course lessons. I will either remail the course within five days after its receipt or send

Name

Address

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National Park Seminary

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For Young Women

To displace the unnecessary minutiae of college work with broad elective courses necessary to individual development is the purpose of National Park Seminary.

The special courses include Art, Music, Expression, Home Economics, Floriculture, Business and Vocational Training. Standards of the best women's colleges are maintained in teaching and scholarship.

The Seminary is situated eighteen minutes from Washington, D. C. Thirty-two nicely equipped buildings on a sixty-five acre campus comprise the school group. Every provision is made for outdoor and indoor exercise. The school takes particular pride in its fine stables and splendid gymnasium.

For catalogue address:

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Sayward's School For Girls. Suburb of Philadelphia. College preparatory and special courses. Certificate to leading colleges. Music, Art, Science. Physical training, outdoor sports, horseback riding, swimming. Develops character, mind and body.

MISS S. JANET SAYWARD, Principal.

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Box 257, Bethlehem, Pa. Special features offering exceptional opportunities in preparation for college or life. Certificate privilege. Special two-year finishing course for High School graduates. Exceptional advantages in Music, Art, Household Arts and Sciences. Junior Department. Gymnasium and tiled swimming pool. High school location, near New York and Philadelphia. Tennis, basketball, skating, riding, etc. For booklet address:

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Wholesome, practical Christian school life. All open-air sports. Swimming pool. Gymnasium and large modern building. For details address

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Send for New Year Book

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Graduation from high school not necessary. No examination required. Special work in voice, piano, cello, violin, harp and pipe organ with eminent Boston masters. A finely equipped school. New building (6 in all) with new pipe organs; gymnasium and swimming pool.

All outdoor sports. All the opportunities of Boston in Music, Art and historical associations are freely used. Domestic Science, Art, Elocution. Secretarial Course. Course in Costume Design and Home Decoration. Courses in Business Management. Junior College Courses.

A girl, after leaving grammar school, can begin her studies at Mount Ida and continue them until she has an education equivalent to two years in college, taking through her whole course an elective program.

There are some rooms with hot and cold water. Students for 1918-19 are being accepted in the order of their applications.

Exceptional opportunities with a delightful home life.

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Mrs. Gertrude Harris Boatwright, Vice-President

Southern Seminary



5th Year

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Now, there has grown up in the City of Baltimore, in connection with a great private day school, a Home Instruction Department of the high object and purpose of which is the education of children from 4 to 12 years of age, entirely in their own homes, and yet according to the best modern methods and under the guidance and supervision of educational experts who are specialists in elementary education.

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Mothers everywhere comment on its remarkable success.

Brochure and teaching plan sent on request. Also ask for literature describing Mr. Hillier's New Book, "Child Training," which covers every phase of Home Training for the child.

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University of Illinois**

announces that, as a war emergency measure, it will begin on June 3, 1918, to operate a continuous session on the Quartermaster System, for the benefit of those students who are either or are the Educational Research Corp. Under this system the calendar year is divided into 3 terms of 4 months each, instead of 3 terms of 3 months each, as under the Trimester or Quarter System, or into 2 terms as under the usual Semester System.

Students will be those entering or in the Extended Medical Research Corp. must put in at least 4 college years of 8 months each and the time elapsing between the entrances on the first medical year and the completion of the last medical year may not be less than forty-four months. The College terms will be as follows:

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The Red Book

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in "What Next?"

Photograph by Moffett Studio, Chicago

Is Your Conversation a Good Advertisement for You?

A common-sense editorial by BRUCE BARTON

AS we rode up from Washington together, a man who is a personal friend of President Wilson talked to me about him.

"One thing that always impresses me," he said, "is the wonderful precision of his speech. His mind seems to reach out and grasp the needed word with unfaltering accuracy. I have never known him to hesitate for a word, or to employ one that required the slightest modification or explanation.

"I once asked him to what he attributed this power.

"He answered that it was due to the early training of his father.

"My father never allowed any member of his household to use an incorrect expression," said the President. "Any slip on the part of one of the children was at once corrected; any unfamiliar word was immediately explained; each of us was encouraged to find a use for it in our conversation so as to fix it in our memories."

AS we stepped off the train and walked through the station, we passed a group of smartly dressed young women. Their conversation, as we caught it, was somewhat after this fashion:

"Not re-ally?"

"Sure! I thought I'd die."

"You don't mean it! Not re-ally?"

"Sure, I tell you. I thought I'd die."

We did not need to hear more. They had advertised their mental equipment and condition to us. Their sparsely settled minds were spread before us: we read them like a map.

An unjust prejudice has grown up in the world against the man who talks well, and in favor of the wise-looking individual, who sits stolid, saying nothing. My observation is that generally speaking, poverty of speech is the outward evidence of poverty of mind. The individual whose commu-

nication is confined to half a dozen worn expressions has a mind that is not working. It is merely sliding along in well-oiled grooves. A mind reaching out along new paths of thought will of necessity find new language with which to clothe that thought.

There is a certain New York business man who makes it a rule to ask every applicant for a position: "Can you write well?"

A strange question, one would think, to put to a prospective elevator boy. Yet the business man has a reason for it.

"No man can write clearly," he says, "who does not think clearly. I want to see a man's mind at work before I give him a place in my organization."

A mastery of clean-cut English is possible to anybody. One way to acquire it is by reading aloud. Select an author worth reading, and keep your mind fixed not merely on the meaning of the words, but on the words themselves. Another good exercise is the one Benjamin Franklin used. He would read a page from some English classic, and then, putting away the book, seek to reproduce it in writing. By comparing his version with the original, he learned wherein he could improve.

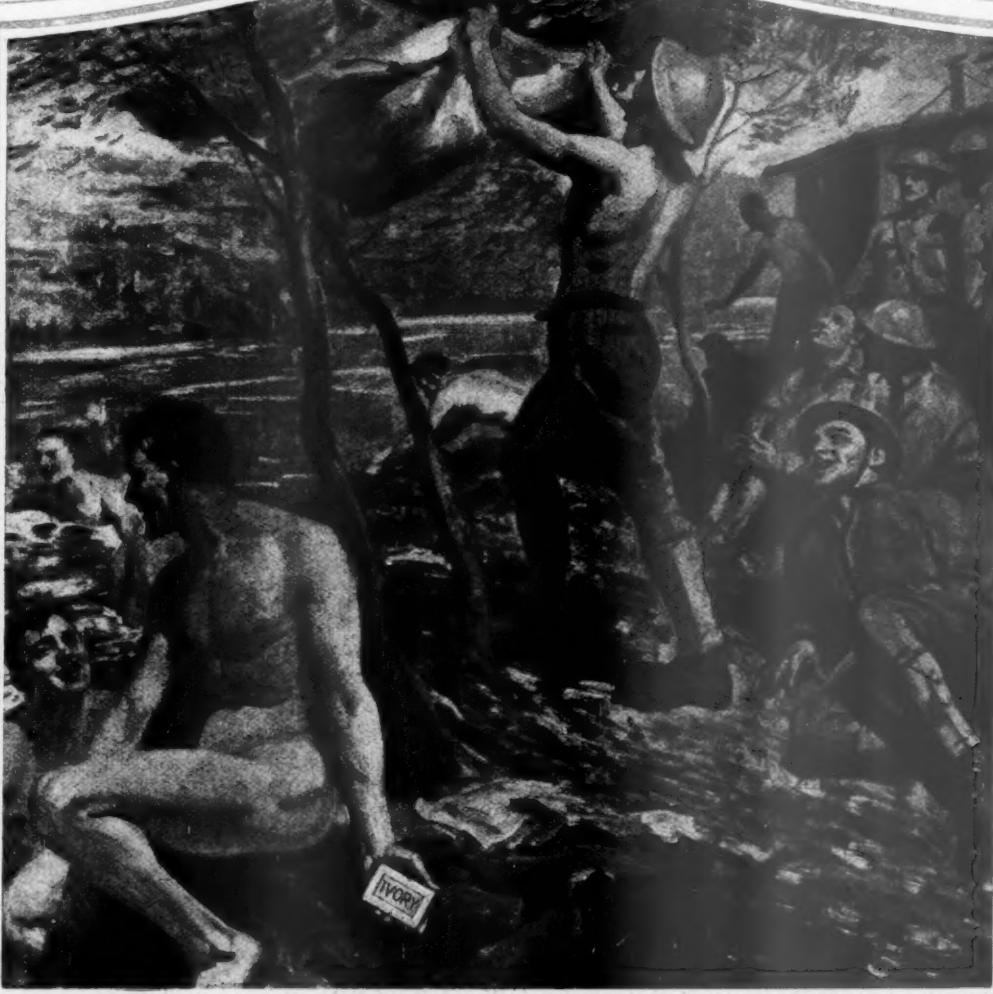
EMERSON said that Montaigne's words had so much vitality that if one were to cut them they would bleed.

Daniel Webster used to study the dictionary as other men study the financial page. It paid him: it will pay you.

For good or ill, your conversation is your advertisement. Every time you open your mouth, you let men look into your mind.

Do they see it well clothed, neat, businesslike?

Or is it slouching along in shoes run down at the heel, with soiled linen and frazzled trousers, shabbily seeking to avoid real work?



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SEPT., 1918
Vol. XXXI, No. 5THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINERAY LONG
Editor

THIS is the sixth novel by Mr. Hughes which we have published serially—"What Will People Say?" in 1913-14, "Empty Pockets" in 1914-15, "The Thirteenth Commandment" in 1915-16, "We Can't Have Everything" in 1916-17, and "The Unpardonable Sin," which began in the October issue, last year, and thrilled our readers until the July issue, this year. "The Cup of Fury" tells the story of an American girl caught in the whirlpool of to-day's dramatic world-events.

It searches even deeper into human emotions and actions than its predecessors.

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A Novel of Life
As It Must Be
Lived To-day

By
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Foremost Novelist
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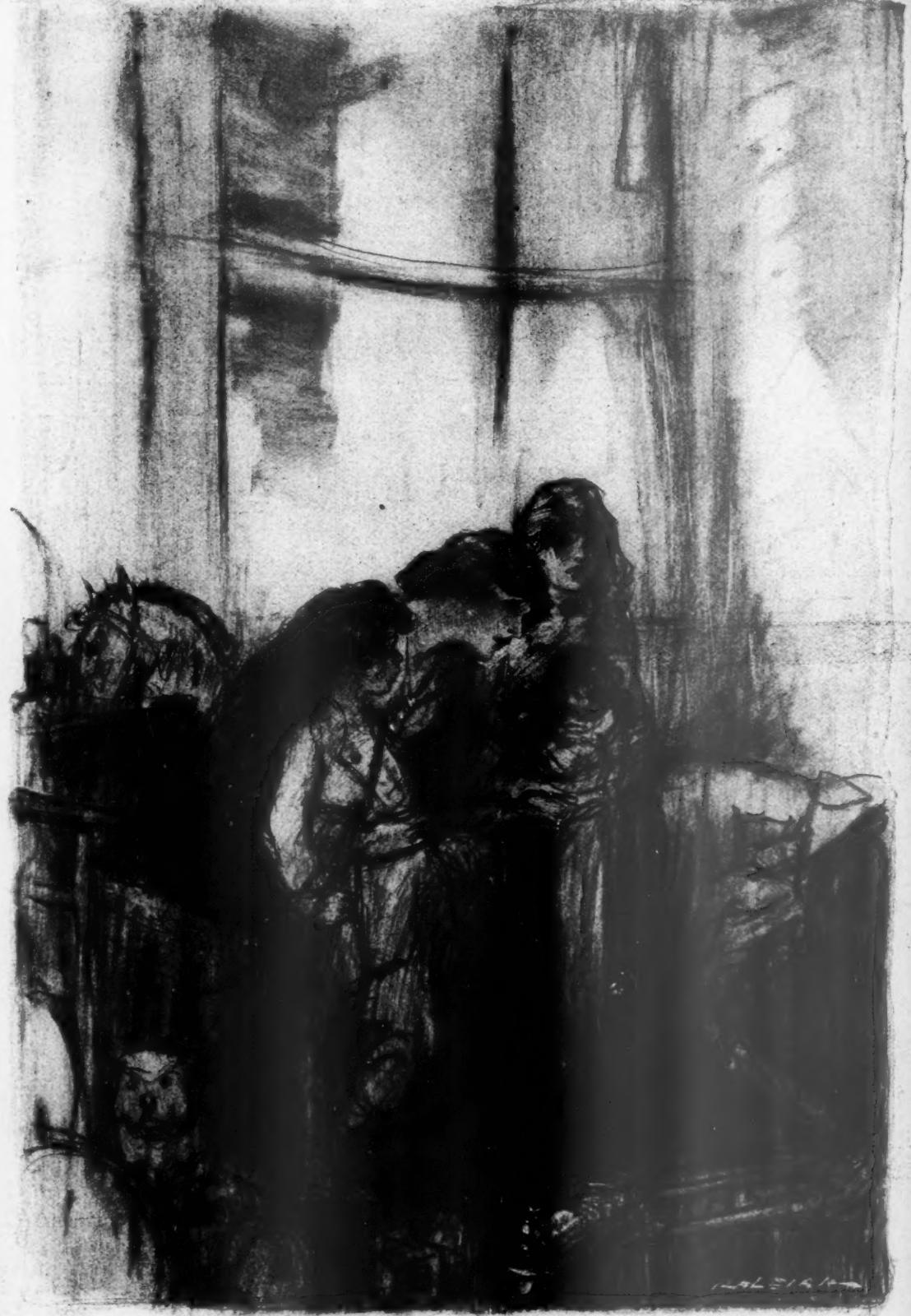
Nicky climbed into the car, shivering with cold or fear.

THEN the big door swung wide as if of itself. Marie Louise had felt that she would scream if she were kept a moment outside. The luxury of simply wishing the gates ajar gave her a fairy-book delight enhanced by the pleasant deference of the footman, whose face seemed to be hung on the door like a Japanese mask.

Marie Louise rejoiced in the dull splendor of the hall. Copyrighted, 1918, by The Red Book Corporation. All rights reserved.

The obsolete gorgeousness of the London home had never been in good taste but had grown as lovable with years as do the gaudy frumperies of a rich old relative; all the good comfortable shelter of wealth won her blessing now as never before. The stairway had something of the grand manner, too, but it condescended graciously to escort her up to her own room; and there, she knew, was a solitude

Marie Louise hunted through her memory among the Grimms' fairy tales. All that she could think of seemed to be made up of ghoulish plots, of children being mistreated by harsh stepmothers, of their being turned over to peasants to slay, of their being changed into animals or birds; of their being seized by wolves, or by giants that drank blood and crunched children's bones as if they were reed birds; of hags that cut them up into bits or thrust them into ovens and cooked them for gingerbread. It occurred to her that all the German fairy stories were murderously cruel.



where she could cry as hard as she wanted to, and therefore usually did not want to. Besides, her mood now was past crying for.

She was afraid of the world, afraid of the light. She felt the cave-impulse to steal into a deep nook and cower there till her heart should be replenished with courage as hearts are, automatically, as ponds are fed from above.

Marie Louise wanted walls about her, and stillness, and people shut out. She was in one of the moods when the soul longs to gather its faculties together in a family, making one self of all its selves. Marie Louise had known privation and homelessness and the perils they bring a young woman, and now she had riches and a father and mother who were great people in a great land, and who had adopted her into their own hearts, their lives, their name. But to-day she asked nothing more than a deep cranny in a dark cave.

She would have said that no human voice or presence could be anything but a torture to her. And yet when she hurried up the steps, she was suddenly miraculously restored to cheerfulness by the tiny explosion of a child's laughter instantly quenched. She knew that she was about to be ambushed as usual. She must pretend to be completely surprised once more, and altogether terrified with her perfect regularity.

Her soul had been so utterly surprised and terrified in the outer world that this infantile parody was curiously welcome, since nothing keeps the mind in balance on the tight-rope of sanity like the counterweight that comedy furnishes to tragedy; farce to frenzy, and puerility to solemnity.

The children called her "Auntie," but they were not hers except through the adoption of a love that had to claim some kinship. They looked like her children, though—so much so, indeed, that strangers thought that she was their young mother. But it was because she looked like their mother, who had died, that the American girl was a member of this British household, inheriting some of its wealth and much of its perilous destiny.

She had been ambuscaded in the street to-day by demons not of faery but of fact, that had leaped out at her from nowhere. It solaced her somehow to burlesque the terror that had whelmed her, and now that she was assailed by ruthless thugs of five and seven years, the shrieks she had not dared to release in the street she gave forth with vigor, as two nightgowned tots flung themselves at her with milk-curdling cries of:

"Boo-oooh!"

Holding up pink fat hands for pistols, they snapped their thumbs at her and said:

"Bang! Bang!"

And she emitted most amusing squeals of anguish and staggered back, stammering:

"Oh, p-p-please, Mr. Robbobber and Miss Burgurgular, take my l-l-life but spare my m-m-money."

She had been so genuinely scared before that she marred the sacred text now, and the First Murderer, who had all the conservative instincts of childhood, had to correct her misquotation of the sacred formula:

"No, no, Auntie. Say: 'Take my money but spare my life!' Now we dot to do it all over."

"I beg your pardon humbly," she said, and went back to be ambushed again. This time the boy had an inspiration. To murder and robbery he would add scalping.

BUT Marie Louise was tired. She had had enough of fright, real or feigned, and refused to be scalped. Besides, she had been to the hairdresser's, and she explained that she really could not afford to be scalped. The boy was bitterly disappointed, and he grew furious when the untimely maid came for him and for his ruthless sister and demanded that they come to bed at once or be reported.

As the warriors were dragged off to shameful captivity, Marie Louise, watching them, was suddenly shocked by

the thought of how early in life humanity begins to revel in slaughter. The most innocent babes must be taught not to torture animals. Cruelty comes with them like a caul, or a habit brought in from a previous existence. They always almost murder their mothers and sometimes quite slay them when they are born. Their first pastimes are killing games, playing dead, stories of witches, cannibalistic ogres. The American Indian is the international nursery pet because of his traditional fiendishness.

It seemed inconsistent, but it was historically natural that the boy interrupted in his massacre of his beloved aunt should hang back to squall that he would say his prayers only to her. Marie Louise glanced at her watch. She had barely time to dress for dinner, but the children had to be obeyed. She made one weak protest:

"Fräulein hears your prayers."

"But she's wended out."

"Well, I'll hear them, then."

"Dot to tell us fairy 'tory, too," said the girl.

"All right, one fairy 'tory—"

She went to the nursery, and the cherubs swarmed up to her lap demanding "something bluggy."

INVENTION failed her completely. She hunted through her memory among the Grimms' fairy tales. She could recall nothing that seemed sweet and guileless enough for these two lambs.

All that she could think of seemed to be made up of ghoulish plots, of children being mistreated by harsh stepmothers, of their being turned over to peasants to slay, of their being changed into animals or birds; of their being seized by wolves, or by giants that drank blood and crunched children's bones as if they were reed birds; of hags that cut them up into bits or thrust them into ovens and cooked them for gingerbread. It occurred to her that all the German fairy stories were murderously cruel. She felt a revulsion against each of the legends. But her mind could not find substitutes.

After a period of that fearful ordeal when children tyrannize for romances that will not come, her mind grew mutinous and balked. She confessed her poverty of ideas.

The girl Bettina sulked; the boy screamed:

"Aw, botheration! We might as well say our prayers and go to bed."

In the least pious of moods they dropped from her knees to their own and put their clasped hands across her lap. They became in a way hallowed by their attitude, and the world seemed good to her again as she looked down at the two children beautiful as only children can be, innocent of wile, of hardship and of crime, safe at home and praying to their heavenly Father from whose presence they had so recently come.

But as she brooded over them motherly and took strength from them as mothers do, she thought of other children in other countries orphaned in swarms, starving in multitudes, waiting for food like flocks of lambs in the blizzard of the war. She thought still more vividly of children flung into the ocean. She had seen these children at her knees fighting against bitter medicines, choking on them and blurring them out at mouth and nose and almost it seemed at eyes. So it was very vivid to her how children thrown into the sea must have gagged with terror at the bitter medicine of death, strangled and smothered as they drowned.

She heard the prayers mumbled through, but at the hasty "Amen" she protested.

"You didn't thank God for anything. Haven't you anything to thank God for?"

If they had expressed any doubt, she would have told them of dozens of special mercies, but almost instantly they answered: "Oh, yes!" They looked at each other, understood, nodded, clapped their hands and chuckled with pride. Then they bent their heads, gabled their fingers, and the boy said:

"We t'ank Dee, O Dod, for making sink dat old *Lusitania*." And the girl said "A-men!"

Marie Louise gave a start as if she had been stabbed. It was the loss of the *Lusitania* that had first terrified her. She had just seen it announced on the placards of newsboys in London streets, and had fled home to escape from the vision, only to hear the children thank Heaven for it! She rose so suddenly that she flung the children back from their knees to their haunches. They stared up at her in wondering fear. She stepped outside the baleful circle and went striding up and down the room, fighting herself back to self-control, telling herself that the children were not to blame, yet finding them the more repulsive for their very innocence. The purer the lips, the viler the blasphemy.

She was not able to restrain herself from denouncing them with all her ferocity. She towered over them and cried out upon them: "You wicked, wicked little beasts, how dare you put such loathsome words into a prayer! God must have gasped with horror in heaven at the shame of it. Wherever did you get so hateful an idea?"

"Wicked your own self!" the boy snapped back. "Fräulein read it in the paper about the old boat, and she walked up and down the room like what you do, and she said: 'Ach, unser Dott—how dood you are to us, to make sink dat *Lusitania*!'"

He was going on to describe her ecstasy, but Marie Louise broke in:

"It's Fräulein's work, is it? I might have known that! Oh, the fiend, the harpy!"

The boy did not know what a harpy was, but he knew that his beloved Fräulein was being called something, and he struck at Marie Louise fiercely, kicked at her shins and tried to bite her hands, screaming:

"You shall not call our own precious Fräulein names. Harpy, your own self!"

And the little girl struck and scratched and made a curdled face and echoed: "Harpy, your own self!"

It hurt Marie Louise so extravagantly to be hated by these irascible cherubs that her anger vanished in regret. She pleaded:

"But, my darlings, you don't know what you are saying. The *Lusitania* was a beautiful ship—"

The boy Victor was loyal always to his own:

"She wasn't as beautiful as my yacht what I sail in the Round Pond."

Marie Louise condescended to argue:

"Oh, yes, she was! She was a great ship, noble like Saint Paul's Cathedral, and she was loaded with passengers, men and women and children: and then suddenly she was ripped open and sunk, and little children like you were thrown into the water, into the deep, deep, deep ocean. And the big waves tore them from their mothers' arms and ran off with them, choking and strangling them and dragging them down and down—forever down."

HE was dizzied by the horde of visions mobbing her brain. Then the onrush of horror was checked abruptly, as she saw the supercilious lad regarding her frenzy calmly. His comment was:

"It served 'em jolly well right for bein' on 'at old boat."

Marie Louise almost swooned with dread of such a soul. She shrank from the boy and groaned:

"Oh, you toad, you little toad!"

He was frightened a little by her disgust, and he took refuge in a higher authority.

"Fräulein told us. And she knows."

The bit lassiky stormed to his support:

"She does so!" and drove it home with the last nail of feminine argument: "So there now!"

Marie Louise retorted weakly:

"We'll see! We'll soon see!"

And she rushed out of the room, like another little girl,

straight to the door of Sir Joseph, where she knocked impatiently. His man appeared and murmured through a crevice: "Sorry, miss, but Seh Joseph is dressing."

Marie Louise went to Lady Webling's door, and a maid came to whisper: "She is in her teb. We're having dinner at tote to-night, miss."

Marie Louise nodded. Dinner must be served, and on time. It was the one remaining solemnity that must not be forgotten or delayed.

She went to her own room. Her maid was in a stew about the hour, and the gown that was to be put on. Marie Louise felt that black was the only wear on such a Bartholomew's night. But Sir Joseph hated black so well that he had put a clause in his will against its appearance even at his own funeral. Marie Louise loved him dearly, but she feared his prejudices. She had an abject terror of offending him, because she felt that she owed everything she had, and was, to the whim of his good grace. Gratitude was a passion with her, and it doomed her, as all passions do, good or bad, to the penalties human beings pay for every excess of virtue or vice—if, indeed, vice is anything but an immoderate, untimely virtue.

CHAPTER II

MARIE LOUISE let her maid select the gown. She was an exquisite picture as she stood before the long mirror and watched the buckling on of her armor, her armor of taffeta and velvet with the colors of sunlit leaves and noon-warmed flowers in carefully elected wrinkles assured with many a hook and eye. Her image was radiant and pliant and altogether love-worthy, but her thoughts were sad and stern.

She was resolved that Fräulein should not remain in the house another night. She wondered that Sir Joseph had not ousted her from the family at the first crash of war. The old crone! She could have posed for one of the Brothers Grimm's most vulturine witches. But she had kept a civil tongue in her head till now: the children adored her, and Sir Joseph had influence enough to save her from being interned or deported.

Hitherto, Marie Louise had felt sorry for her in her dilemma of being forced to live at peace in the country her own country was locked in war with. Now she saw that the woman's oily diplomacy was only for public use, and that all the while she was imbruing the minds of the little children with the dye of her own thoughts. The innocents naturally accepted everything she told them as the essence of truth.

Marie Louise hoped to settle the affair before dinner, but by the time she was gowned and primped, the first premature guest had arrived like the rathest primrose, shy, surprised and surprising. Sir Joseph had gone below already. Lady Webling was on the stairway.

Marie Louise saw that her protest must wait till after the dinner, and she followed to do her duty to the laws of hospitality.

Sir Joseph liked to give these great affairs. He loved to eat and to see others eat. "The more the merrier," was his motto—one of the most truthless of the old saws. Little dinners at Sir Joseph's—what he called "on fames" —would have been big dinners elsewhere. A big dinner was like a Lord Mayor's banquet. He needed only a crier at his back or a Petronius to immortalize his *gourmandise*.

To-night he had great folk and small fry. Nobody pretended to know the names of everybody. Sir Joseph himself leaned heavily on the man who sang out the labels of the guests, and even then his wife whispered them to him as they came forward, and for a precaution, kept slipping them into the conversation as reminders.

Marie Louise had no genius for names or faces either. To-night she was frightened, and she made some horrible



He tried to swing her to the pommel, but she fought herself free and came to the ground and was almost trampled.

blunders, greeting the grisly Mr. Verrinder by the name of Mr. Hilary. The association was clear, for Mr. Hilary had called Mr. Verrinder atrocious names in Parliament; but it was like calling *Mr. Capulet Mr. Montague*. Marie Louise tried to redeem her blunder by putting on an extra effusiveness for the sake of Mr. and Mrs. Norcross. Mrs. Norcross had only recently shaken off the name of Mrs. Patchett after a resounding divorce. So Marie Louise

called her new husband by the name of her old. Which made it very pleasant.

Her wits were so badly dispersed that she gave up the attempt to take in the name of an American whom Lady Webling passed along to her as "Mr. Davidge, of the States." And he must have been somebody of importance, for even Sir Joseph got his name right. Marie Louise, however, disliked him cordially at once—for two reasons.

She hated herself so much that she could not like anybody just then; next, this American was entirely too American. He was awkward and indifferent, but not at all with the easy amble and patrician unconcern of an English aristocrat.

Marie Louise was American born herself, and humbly born, at that, but she liked extreme Americanism never the more. Perhaps she was a bit of a snob, though fate was getting ready to beat the snobbery out of her. And hers was an unintentional superficial snobbery, at worst. Some people said she was affected and that she aped the swagger dialect. But she had a habit of taking on the accent and color of her environments. She had not been in England a month before she spoke Piccadilly almost impeccably. She had caught French and German intonations with equal speed and had picked up music by ear with the same amazing facility in the days when certain kinds of music were her livelihood.

In one respect her Englishness of accent was less an imitation or an affectation than a certain form of politeness and modesty. When an Englishwoman said "Cahn't you?" it seemed tactless to answer "No, I can't." To respond to "Good mawning" with "Good mornning" had the effect of a contradiction or a correction. She had none of the shibboleth-spirit that leads certain people to die or slay for a pronunciation. The pronunciation of the people she was talking to was good enough for her. She conformed also because she hated to see people listening less to what she said than to the Yankee way she said it.

THIS man Davidge had a superb brow and a look of success, but he bored her before he reached her. She made ready for flight to some other group. Then he startled her—by being startled as he caught sight of her. When Lady Webling transmitted him with a murmur of his name and a tender "My daughter," Davidge stopped short and mumbled:

"I've had the pleasure of meeting you before, somewhere, haven't I?"

Marie Louise snubbed him flatly. "I think not."

He took the slap with a smile: "Did I hear Lady Webling call you her daughter?"

Marie Louise did not explain, but answered curtly, "Yes," with the aristocratic English parsimony that makes it almost "Yis."

"Then you're right and I'm wrong. I beg your pardon."

"Daon't mention it," said Marie Louise, and drew closer to Lady Webling and the oncoming guest. She had the decency to reproach herself for being beastly to the stranger, but his name slipped at once through the sieve of her memory.

Destiny is the grandiose title we give to the grand total of a long column of accidents when we stop to tot up the figures. So we wait till that strange sum of accidents which we call a baby is added up into a living child of determined sex before we fasten a name that changes an it to a him or a her.

The accidents that result in a love-affair, too, we look back on and outline into a definite road, and we call that Fate. We are great for giving names to selected fragments of the chaos of life.

In after years Marie Louise and this man Davidge would see something mystic and intended in the meeting that was to be the detached prologue of their after conflicts. They would quite misremember what really happened—which was, that she retained no impression of him at all, and that he called himself a fool for mixing her with a girl he had met years and years before for just a moment, and had never forgotten because he had not known her well enough to forget her.

He had reason enough to distrust his sanity for staring at a resplendent creature in a London drawing-room and imagining for a moment that she was a long-lost, long-

sought girl of old dreams—a girl he had seen in a cheap vaudeville theater in a Western State. She was one of a musical team that played all sorts of instruments, xylophones, saxophones, trombones, accordions, cornets, conical instruments concealed in hats and umbrellas. This girl had played each of them in turn, in solo or with the rest of the group. The other mummers were coarse and vaude-vulgar, but she had captivated Davidge with her wild beauty, her magnetism and the strange cry she put into her music.

When she played the trombone, she looked to him like one of the angels on a cathedral trumpeting an apocalyptic summons to the dead to bloom from their graves. When she played the cornet, it was with a superhuman tone that shook his emotions almost insufferably. She had sung, too, in four voices—in an imitation of a bass, a tenor, a contralto and finally as a lyric soprano, then skipping from one to the other. They called her "Mamise, the Quartet in One."

Davidge had thought her marvelous and had asked the manager of the theater to introduce him. The manager had thought him a young fool, and Davidge had felt himself one when he went back to the dingy stage, where he found Mamise among a troupe of trained animals waiting to go on. She was teasing a chittering, cigar-smoking trained ape on a bicycle, and she proved to be an extraordinarily ordinary, painfully plebeian girl, common in voice and diction, awkward and rather contemptuous of the stage-door Johnnie. Davidge had never ceased to blush, and blushed again now, when he recalled his labored compliment: "I expect to see your name in the electric lights some of these days—or nights, Miss Mamise."

She had grumbled "Much obliged!" and returned to the ape, while Davidge slunk away, ashamed.

He had not forgotten that name, though the public had. He had never seen "Mamise" in the electric lights. He had never found the name in any dictionary. He had supposed her to be a foreigner—Spanish, Cuban, Czech, French or something. He had not been able to judge her nationality from the two gruff words, but he had often wondered what had happened to her. She might have been killed in a train-wreck, or been married to the ape-trainer or gone to some other horrible conclusion. He had pretty well buried her among his forgotten ambitions and torments, when lo and behold! she emerged from a crowd of peeresses and plutocrats in London.

He had sprung toward her with a wild look of recognition before he had had time to think it over. He had been rebuffed by a cold glance and then by an English intonation and a fashionable phrase. He decided that his memory had made a fool of him.

But his eyes quarreled with his ears, and kept telling him that this tall beauty who ignored him so perfectly haughtily, was really his lost Mamise.

If men would trust their intuitions oftener they would not go wrong so often perhaps, since their best reasoning is only guesswork after all. It was not going to be destiny that brought Davidge and Marie Louise together again so much as the man's hatred of leaving anything unfinished—even a dream or a vague desire. There was no shaking Davidge off a thing he determined on except as you shake off a snapping turtle, by cutting off his head.

A LITTLE later Sir Joseph sought the man out and treated him respectfully, and Marie Louise knew he must be somebody. She found him staring at her own Sir Joseph's shoulder and puzzling about her. And this made her wretchedly uncomfortable, for perhaps after all, she fretted, he had indeed met her somewhere before, somewhere in one of those odious strata she had passed through on her way up to the estate of being called daughter by Lady Webling.

She forgot her misgivings and (Continued on page 117)

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she turned to Marie Louise and demanded: "You ditt not theenk this man is a Cherman?" This one more shame crushed Marie Louise. She dropped into a appealing feebly to the man she had retrieved: "Your name is not von Gröner?" Bickford grinned. "Well, in a manner of speakin'. You might say it's my pen-name."



THE HOME GOAL

By EDGAR A. GUEST

Decoration by Clark Fay

THERE'S the mother at the doorway, and the child
at the gate,
And the little parlor windows with the curtains
and straight.

There are shaggy asters blooming in the bed that
the fence,
And the simplest of the blossoms seems of
consequence.

Oh, there isn't any mansion underneath God's starry dome,
That can rest a weary pilgrim like the little place called home.

Men have sought for gold and silver; men have dreamed
at night of fame;

In the heat of youth they've struggled for achievement,
honored name;

But the selfish crowns are tinsel, and their shiny
jewels paste,

And the wine of pomp and glory soon grows bitter
to the taste.

For there's never any laughter, howsoever far you roam,
Like the laughter of the loved ones in the happiness of home.

There is nothing so important as the mother's lullabies,
Filled with peace and sweet contentment, when the moon
begins to rise—

Nothing real except the beauty and the calm upon her
face

And the shouting of the children as they scamper
round the place.

For the greatest of man's duties is to keep his loved ones glad,
And to have his children glory in the father they have had.

So where'er a man may wander, and whatever be his care,
You'll find his soul still stretching to the home he loves
somewhere.

You'll find his dreams all tangled up with hollyhocks
in bloom,

And the feet of little children that go racing through
a room,

With the happy mother smiling as she watches them at play—
These are all in life that matter, when you've stripped the
sham away.

THE old, old triangle: a man, his wife—and the family friend. It is the sort of situation from which movie melodrama is made. Sanity and Gouverneur Morris' cleverness have turned it into brilliant comedy-drama.

The YELLOW ENVELOPE

By
GOVERNEUR
MORRIS

Illustrated by
ORSON LOWELL

TRENT had already intimated to his wife and Locksley that some more definite line of conduct must be decided on. Evelyn Trent, who had taken the children to the beach for their morning swim, had telephoned that she would be a quarter of an hour late. And so, for the moment, the two men had Trent's library to themselves.

The room was in unusually good order. Locksley noticed this. There was no litter of papers on the writing table—nothing but the Empire inkwell, the red blotter bound in bronze, and in the midst of the blotter, a pale yellow envelope. Trent had only just laid this down, and pressed it with his hand to make the damp gum stick.

Trent had not offered to shake hands with Locksley, but he had nodded pleasantly enough and pushed a box of cigarettes toward him.

"I am glad," he said, "that we are to have a few minutes to ourselves. The first time we talked about this infernal business you seemed to agree with me that Evelyn's best ultimate chance of contentment was with me and the children. You talked, I thought at the time, in a very sensible and manly way. You thought it for the best that the break should be gradual, and that I should do nothing to force it. You and Evelyn were to see each other from time to time, and you took it upon yourself to see that very gradually these times became fewer and farther between. Putting your own love aside, and thinking only of what was best for Evelyn, you were to let her see very gradually that the intensity of your feeling was passing, that the storm was blowing over. I left everything to you.

"That was five months ago. During the eight days following our talk, you and Evelyn saw each other nine times. Now, that was not my idea of once in a while.



Before burning the envelope and its contents, he read once more the terrible threat that had brought Evelyn to her knees.

How frequently you have seen each other since, I don't know. But it seems to me that you have been here pretty constantly in my house, or else she has been in town seeing you. Perhaps I am oversuspicious," Trent concluded, "but I should like to know from your own lips just how much progress you are making in keeping away from Evelyn—in doing what you said you would do."

Locksley lighted a fresh cigarette before he answered. Then looking Trent in the eyes and smiling faintly he said: "None—absolutely none."

"So I had concluded," said Trent. "And I presume that your reasons for not keeping your word seem sufficient to you. But no matter what they are, you can't expect them to make very good with me. Can you?"

"Of course not," said Locksley. "But you see when a man loves a woman, he simply can't pretend that he doesn't. I thought I could. I couldn't. To tell the truth, when it came to the pinch, I didn't know how to go about it."

"If I had been in your boots," said Trent, "I believe that I should have succeeded in doing this impossible thing—just as for the last five months I have succeeded in

concealing from you the feelings which I really have for you. My attitude toward you has been courteous and even friendly. You will be the first to admit that."

"You have been wonderful," said Locksley.

The older man shrugged the compliment aside, and repeated:

"If I had been in your boots, I should have continued to tell Evelyn that I loved her—of course. But I should have showed an increasing tendency to be late at appointments; now and then when I felt that I had fabricated a peculiarly good excuse, I should have sent word at the last moment that I could not keep the appointment at all. I should have been called away from time to time on business the exact nature of which I was not at liberty to reveal. And I should have placed a growing emphasis on the desirability of her trusting me implicitly."

"You passed your whole vacation with us—ten days. At the last moment you might have invented some imaginary profitable deal which required your presence elsewhere. You could have said that you could not afford to give up so much money, merely for pleasure. Later, knowing Evelyn's habits as well as you do, you could have arranged that she should actually see you in one place, when you had given her to understand that you had to be in another. I have mentioned only a few things that you might have done. But you have merely drifted, as I supposed

Trent had not offered to shake hands with Locksley, but he had nodded pleasantly enough and pushed a box of cigarettes toward him.

you would; and matters are just as bad for us three as ever they were. But if you and Evelyn have drifted, I haven't. I have spent all this time thinking out some clear, definite



course. I hate drifting and putting things off. I like a show-down. . . . There she is now."

From the manner in which Evelyn nodded to her husband and Locksley, it would have been impossible to argue that she liked one man better than the other. Rosy from her bath, and in cheerful spirits, she stood smiling and supposed that they were all "in for it" again.

"I am afraid we are," said her husband, "—but for the last time. That being the case, I ask for complete frankness all round. Do you mind shutting the door behind you?"

He himself shut that one which opened into the narrow passage which led to his bedroom, and coming back to the writing-table, picked up the yellow envelope, turned it over to see if it was well sealed and put it down again.

"Eve," he said, "are you happy?"

"Why, no," she said promptly. "Of course not!"

"Are you more happy or less happy than you were five months ago?"

"What is the use," she said, "of going into all that? If you must know, I'm a little more used to being perfectly miserable. And that's all."

"I had hoped," said Trent, "that in agreeing that you and Locksley should see each other, you would find life a little better than—perfectly miserable. I knew at the time we were all making a mistake. But you talked about going mad and killing yourself if you were forced to give him up. And of course I weakened. I suppose you aren't happy either, Locksley. Not being at liberty to marry my wife hurts, and you must also suffer from remorse. To be conscious of having made love to a man's wife during the absence of that man, and to have smashed a reasonably contented combination of persons all to pieces, can't be altogether pleasant."

"Perhaps I am oversensitive," Trent concluded, "but I should like to know just how much progress you are making in keeping away from Evelyn."





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"Dear Julian," said Mrs. Trent, "what is the use?" "Sorry," said Trent, "but you've got to listen to me this time. So," he went on, "we are none of us anything but perfectly miserable. I don't say that you two might not have done worse. You could have gone the limit. You didn't, and that's our one and only ray of light."

"I didn't know that *you* were perfectly miserable," said Mrs. Trent. "I've heard lots of people say that they've never seen you in such good form. I thought that you, at least, were getting used to things."

"After the first few weeks," said her husband, "after I got my nerves in hand, I have tried to show a cheerful face to all comers, especially to you and the children. But a man who loves his wife doesn't ever get used to her soul-mate."

"Really, Julian!" exclaimed Mrs. Trent, horrified at the word.

"In private," said Trent, "I have been eating my heart out. It is nearly all gone. The night you were so late that I almost believed you and Locksley had broken your word to me and run away together, I took one of the morphine tablets left over from your appendix days. I don't propose

to dilate on what I have gone through. It has been hell. I have lost twenty-two pounds in five months. I thought that I was strong enough to do right by you and the children so long as you could merely pretend to be my wife, and that I could put up with Locksley indefinitely. I can't. I could never understand why you were always mixing up *can't* with *wont*. But I understand now. I've learned even that lesson. You *can't* give Locksley up. You *can't* come back to me. You *can't* do right. Well, I *can't* give you up, and I *can't* go on the way we've been going, any longer."

"If you think that Howard and I will ever give each other up, you are greatly mistaken!" Mrs. Trent had spoken very quickly, tensely and under her breath.

Trent went on as if he had not heard her, though a certain tigress-defending-its-young quality in her voice had stabbed him to the quick.

"I am in the position of a man who though innocent has been tried, found guilty and condemned to a life term. You and Locksley have sentenced me. You deny me any semblance of the square deal that I have given you. You, on the other hand, the people who have done wrong, are free

to take whatever step you think best for your own happiness. You are free to go on this way, if on the whole you find that you wish to; you are free to cheat, you are free to run away together; Evelyn is free to go and live somewhere out West for a while and divorce me. I tell you, the injustice of it stings me like an acid.

"In the beginning of things, Eve, I begged you to give me my chance. You talked of suicide, of going mad, of turning against the children, even. In his heart Locksley agrees that I ought to have my chance; in his heart he believes that chance is not as slim as it might be. You have fallen in and out of love before this—with me first, then with Crobert. So I have a chance."

"For heaven's sake," exclaimed Mrs. Trent impatiently, "what chance are you talking about?"

A MOMENTARY impatience showed in Trent's face, but in his voice there was only a faint trace of weariness.

"I believe," he said, "as I have always believed, that if you would stop seeing Locksley, and stop communicating with him, you would in time get over the feeling you have for him and find contentment if not happiness with the children and me. And I think that would be the right thing to do, and the fair thing; and anyone whose passions were not involved would agree with me. In his heart Locksley agrees with me. It's wonderful," he concluded, his face brightening suddenly, "how often doing right gets the best results for everybody concerned."

Mrs. Trent started to speak; but her husband interrupted her with an emphatic gesture.

"Please," he said, "don't say that you will never give him up, until you have heard all I have to say. And please don't do it then. Wait until you have talked the matter over for half an hour with him. We've just time to get this matter all finished and settled before lunch."

Mrs. Trent resigned herself to further listening, but not with good grace. If it is possible, she looked sulky and soulful at the same time.

"You see," said Trent, "if you won't give me my one slim chance as a return for all the years of love I've given you,—give it of your own free will,—I shall try to make you."

Her eyes flashed.

"Make me!" she said.

"There is, I realize," said Trent, "only one thing that I can do to make you give me my chance. Heaven knows I don't want to do that. But if I have to, I will."

A dark and fatal look crept into Trent's eyes. He looked slowly from Evelyn to Locksley and back to Evelyn.

"If necessary,"—his words came slowly and almost solemnly,—"I shall play my last card." And then his words came all jangling and awhirl. "Do you think I'm going to let you two deny me my chance, when I have the power to make you give it to me? Do you think I'm just going to go brooding over the wrong you've done me until I go mad?" He pulled at his collar as if it was choking him. Mrs. Trent did not like her husband's look at that moment; neither did Locksley. He felt that he ought to say something, and couldn't. Mrs. Trent broke the silence with a very mild: "What is the last card, Julian?"

"If you do what I wish," said Trent, "you will never know. I'd rather you didn't. But if you refuse to do what I wish,—if you refuse to give me my chance,—as I propose to give you yours, why, then you'll find out, and rather quickly, I imagine. . . . I have written down what I'm going to do, if you refuse. I've written it down on a piece of note-paper, and sealed it in this envelope."

He lifted the yellow envelope from the blotter, showed it to them both and put it down again. And then, with a sudden passion in his voice:

"And there's nothing in God's world," he said, "to prevent me from doing it."

Even Evelyn Trent showed signs of nervousness. Locksley lighted a fresh cigarette.

"Eve, dear," said Trent in a voice at once beseeching and tender, "I ask you for old sake's sake to give this fellow up—absolutely up—for two years. If during that time you get over lovin' him, as I pray to God you will, and as I think you will, you'll come back to me; and even if you're only fond of me,—and that you've said you were through thick and thin,—you'll be my wife and stick to me and let me try to make you happy. If you don't get over lovin' him, nor he get over lovin' you, I'll furnish grounds for divorce and put the thing through as quickly as it can be put through."

"And if during the two years either of you finds that life's getting more or less agreeable without the other—why, that one is to speak up quick. Eve, you'd just tell me, or Locksley could write. This is the only fair way. You have your chance; I have mine. This way, seeing each other all the time, you just fan the flame. It's not just. I can't stand it. The other way you give the flame a chance to prove whether it's a real fire or only a glow-worm."

"I want to know what you are going to do—if we don't give you your chance," said Mrs. Trent.

"It's in the envelope," said Trent, and then with a somewhat wild gesture: "But you'd find out soon enough, anyway. But if you decide for me, I don't want you to know, and I trust to your honor that you will not open the envelope. You are not to open it in any case till after one o'clock."

He looked at his watch.

"There is just half an hour," he said. "Talk it over and decide. At one o'clock, Eve, come to my bedroom door and tell me what you have decided. If you decide for me, why, I shall understand that Locksley has gone away, and that you will not see him again except by accident. But if you have decided against me, why, tell me and then you can open the envelope if you like—but that will be hardly necessary. You will know what I am going to do, soon enough. Eve, if I am to have my chance, I expect you to be brave. Giving him up will hurt you like hell. I know that. But remember you are not necessarily saying good-by forever—that is, to him. Two years isn't long."

He turned and took a step toward the doorway that led to his bedroom. But Evelyn caught him by the sleeve. She was frightened now—thoroughly.

"Julian!" she exclaimed.

He turned slowly and looked at her tenderly. Then an eyebrow lifted in Locksley's direction with a kind of sad whimsicality. "You wouldn't mind, would you? Just once? After all, I'm still her husband."

He caught his wife to him with sudden fervor, kissed her hard on the mouth, turned on his heel and strode quickly from the room. They heard him close and lock his bedroom door.

HOWARD, I'm frightened. I've never seen him like this before."

"I don't like the look in his eyes."

She caught up the yellow envelope.

"We're on honor, Eve!" exclaimed Locksley.

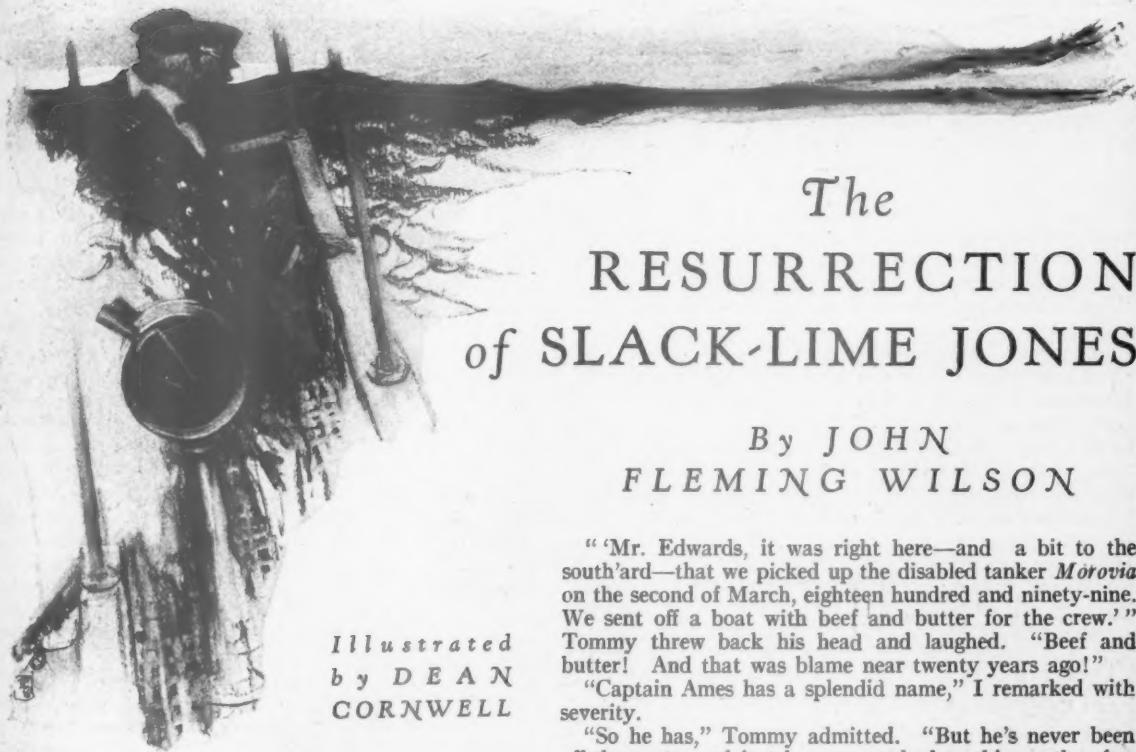
With reluctance she put the envelope down.

"He's been so cheerful, and kind and sweet," she said. "I thought he was all over caring so much. I can't give you up, Howard. I won't give you up. What can he do?"

"He can make such a scandal! Oh, Eve, Eve darling, I tell you I'm all cold inside. Did you get that sentence? He said, 'You're not necessarily saying good-by forever—that is, to him,' meaning me. It sounded as if he meant that you might be saying good-by forever to him. Did you get it?"

"No. Did he say that? Oh, he wouldn't, he wouldn't—say that you know he wouldn't!" (Continued on page 149)

THE sea and fire and woman are three evils, according to a Greek saying. Here's the strange story of a man who suffered from all three, and yet remained captain of his soul.



Illustrated
by DEAN
CORNWELL

I AM getting used to having my flat in New York City invaded at odd hours by young sailor-men I knew on the Pacific. The war has brought them around, a debonair and care-free crew, who accept with a patronizing air the chances of being submarine or mined. They were bred on a coast where perils are so thick that nothing man can do strikes them as extraordinary, and I fear that many of them look down on their worried superiors, men who have used the Atlantic for a generation and miss the old lights and patrols and safeguards.

"Our old man is *so* reminiscent!" quoth my friend Tommy Edwards one night as he sat at my table and humorously recited the events of his first voyage to the English coast. Now, Tommy rose from deck-boy via the usual route of quartermaster, third mate and second officer, to mate of the big Alaskan tripper *Glacier Bay*. When I last saw him before the war, he was capably berthing his ship in Seattle while the captain groaned below with a broken hip. Pain had dulled his commander's ears, and Tommy had navigated the swift liner for eight hundred miles without a sight of land or sun, avoided a score of invisible reefs, shot through narrow passes where a touch on either hand would have ended the voyage in disaster—and all this with never a growl or complaint.

"The Atlantic," he stated, reaching for more bacon, "is a snap."

"You say the skipper of the *Cerulean* is reminiscent?" I suggested.

My guest nodded vigorously. "Like an old farmer showing you over the place," he answered. "One would suppose that in five hundred voyages he'd ha' picked up some information besides lights, lanes, ice and the high cost of living. But he hasn't." Tommy winked at me gravely and raised his voice two tones in imitation of the absent commander of the *Cerulean*:

The RESURRECTION of SLACK-LIME JONES

By JOHN
FLEMING WILSON

"Mr. Edwards, it was right here—and a bit to the south'ard—that we picked up the disabled tanker *Moravia* on the second of March, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine. We sent off a boat with beef and butter for the crew." Tommy threw back his head and laughed. "Beef and butter! And that was blame near twenty years ago!"

"Captain Ames has a splendid name," I remarked with severity.

"So he has," Tommy admitted. "But he's never been off the route, and just because we had to skip north a few hundred miles off the usual course, he didn't sleep three nights, and filled the chart-house with figures."

"Submarines?" I suggested.

"Nary one," answered Tommy. "Scares? Yes."

"One will get you yet."

Edwards' blue eyes grew chilly. "You think so? I wish 'em luck. To be sure, the crew is a collection of weak sisters. I doubt whether ten of 'em ever lowered a boat or saw one lowered, except at drill. However, we sha'n't lower any boats."

I was curious indeed. "You mean to tell me that if a torpedo gets you—"

"No torpedo'll get us," he replied with confidence.

"You'll get over this cocksureness," I told him. "Better men than you—"

"Be kind to a poor second off'cer," he pleaded. "But a secret in your ear: nobody knows it—but, Slack-Lime Jones is with us."

I sought through my memories of many men and ships to place a man with this absurd cognomen. Tommy laughed and swallowed the last of the coffee.

"Old Slack-Lime," he chuckled, "the man who took the *Mayhew* out of San Francisco with a cargo of lime for Portland and ended the voyage twelve days later on the flats at Seattle. Said he got lost in his own fog, ship being on fire and the lime smoking horrid."

"I remember," I told him. "Was broke by the inspectors and went to southeastern Alaska and fished."

"And found the *Bertha* abandoned on Enderman's Reef two years later and salvaged her single-handed and brought her into the Sound, defying the Government to blame him for having no license."

"Then shipped carpenter on the cannery-bark *Star of Bengal* and was lost with her below Karluk," I went on.

"The same," Tommy responded. "Lost with the rest of

the crew of the *Star of Bengal*! That was the story they told. And Slack-Lime Jones stood for it and didn't turn up. You know people said there was a dame—"

"Dear me!" I said. "I'd forgotten the scandal. Wasn't she the girl in Oakland who gave him the mitten after he lost the *Mayhew*?"

"They say so," answered Tommy. "Jones testified that he put the fire in the lime cargo out with the pumps. His mate swore that Jones started the fire by trying to slack enough lime to whitewash the fo'c'sle. Nobody believed this but the inspectors and that girl. Both turned a good man down. Anyway, Jones never came around to deny going down with the rest of the cannery-man's outfit, and most people forgot him. I always remembered him, for I was a kid with him in the old *Utopia*."

Again memory did its office, and I laughed. "Was it the same Jones? I never connected the two."

"The same," said Edwards, puffing at his pipe. "You remember? The old packet took fire off Tillamook Head on a voyage south and darned near burnt up before Jones fetched us inside the Golden Gate. Kept the passengers locked up in their rooms for four days and four nights. Some skipper! But of course the passengers claimed his scalp when they got ashore, and they got it, though anyone acquainted with the facts knew that Jones saved their bally lives for 'em. Well, Slack-Lime has turned up again. He's third officer on the *Cerulean*."

"Name of Jones?"

Tommy scorned me. "Naturally."

"Ticket?"

"If you'd think a minute," he remarked, "you'd know that there are between nine hundred and a thousand Welshmen by the name of Jones with Board of Trade tickets. Slack-Lime had only to pick and choose out of the effects of any Jones he fancied would suit."

"Well, well!" I answered.

"So it is," acquiesced Tommy. "Very well! But I wonder sometimes what Captain Ames would think if he knew his nice, quiet, obliging third officer was that stormy petrel Slack-Lime Jones. Eh?"

"I still don't gather why you think this man Jones is a sure cure for submarines."

"That is another matter," was the answer I got. I pressed my caller for further information. He cocked one eye at the ceiling, then grinned.

"Why'n't you ask him yourself?"

"Would he come?"

"Sure, he would. Sha'n't I tell him how I spent my twenty-four hours' leave and be careful of your eyes?"

I recognized this last as the careful Captain Ames' usual warning to his careless young officers, and I duly invited Mr. Jones by word of mouth.

He turned up the next morning, a quiet shadow of a man who most evidently knew me for merely a kindly chap whom Tommy Edwards had known of old. I made him welcome, and he responded vaguely, ate his breakfast slowly and thoughtfully, with occasional efforts to be entertaining, and steadfastly refused all my suggestions for a busy day.

"If you don't mind, sir," he told me, "New York is probably an old story to you. Of course, if you have anything in mind—"

"Nothing," I answered cheerfully. "You chaps get little enough recreation, I thought. I know Edwards always likes to visit the busy part of the city and drop into a movie and attend a play in the evening."

"Young," said Mr. Jones dryly.

"Still the same boy he always was."

"Is he?" Jones inquired politely.

I gazed surreptitiously at my visitor. An odd figure of a man to have been master of his own ship in bright days, to have suffered greatly at sea and then survived his own finale! Something made me say indifferently: "I reckon you didn't remember him from the *Utopia*?"

The man's hand trembled slightly as he accepted the cigar I offered him. His rather sallow face and dull eyes changed into an expression of—of regret. He made no response, but I felt that he wished to give me the impression that I had been uncivil. I hastened to continue:

"I've known Tommy for years. He mentioned the fact that his old commander was on the *Cerulean*."

"I confess I didn't recall him," Mr. Jones remarked slowly.

"He has a great admiration for you, sir."

My visitor considered this. "How could he?" he inquired presently.

"I don't know exactly why," I told him. "But he seemed relieved to think you were shipmates."

The man sat silently and smoked. After a great while he glanced around at me and said in a steady voice: "Do you know me?"

"Not personally," I responded politely.

"But I fancy few people from the Coast haven't heard of Captain Jones—Slack-Lime Jones."

"It was reported that he was lost with the *Star of Bengal*," he remarked.

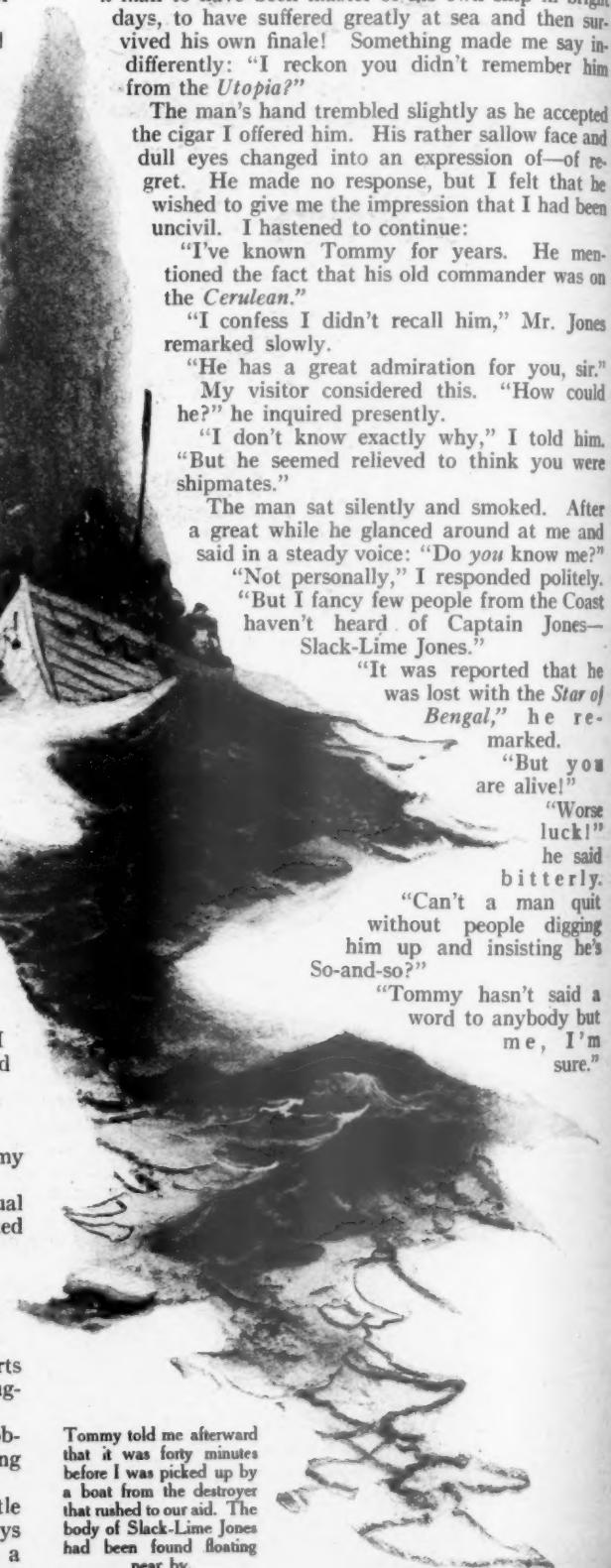
"But you are alive!"

"Worse luck!"

he said bitterly.

"Can't a man quit without people digging him up and insisting he's So-and-so?"

"Tommy hasn't said a word to anybody but me, I'm sure."



Tommy told me afterward that it was forty minutes before I was picked up by a boat from the destroyer that rushed to our aid. The body of Slack-Lime Jones had been found floating near by.

"No matter," he replied. "I'm only the unknown third officer of the *Cerulean*. And that won't last long."

"Submarine?"

"To be sure," he said testily.

"One man against a thousand!"

"One ship against a hundred."

What do you expect?"

"Edwards seemed very confident that your vessel would escape—in fact, said he was glad you were on her—told me I needn't worry."

"I'm not the commander of the *Cerulean*," he snapped.

"I'm sure I don't know what he meant," I retorted. "All I know is he believes in some special virtue in you. So don't disillusion him."

"Too many folks have expected too much of me," Slack-Lime said gloomily. "That's why I'm where I am. They expected me to go down with the *Star of Bengal*. I did my best to satisfy 'em."

"Oh, I'll never tell!" I protested. "None of my business!"

"No," he assented grimly. "And now I'm in a position where I can't consider myself as I used to do." He glowered across the room at me. "Can you imagine why I tried to be lost and when I wasn't, made out I was?"

Now there are a great many reasons why a man should wish himself dead. None of them struck me as a civil suggestion to this middle-aged guest of mine. So I shook my head.

"Seeing you know who I am, and young Edwards knows too, I'll tell you. Then you'll keep my secret."

"Certainly."

"It's very simple. I could never explain satisfactorily why I got in wrong about the ships I commanded. The *Utopia* cost me my chance to stay with that line. I brought her in without a soul the worse for the experience—and the passengers went up in a body and demanded that I be punished for keeping them at sea! Could I explain? No. I'd taken my decision and stuck to it and saved my packet. Then the cargo of the *Mayhew* took fire. My fault? The old tub leaked. Naturally, the lime heated. My mate, who hated me for keeping him at his work, swore I used poor judgment in pumping water

on the fire. Could I explain? I passed the Columbia River, where I was bound, because the old vessel's decks were half burned through and the mainmast tottering—and three breakers on the bar would have ended the

Mayhew. That's the way it went. I lost out all around, and folks began to call me nicknames.

So when the *Star of Bengal* foundered and I discovered that I was the sole survivor, was I going up all alone before the inspectors to explain how and why the bark was lost? Not I! I reckoned

I'd better stay dead—dead to the inspectors, dead to the men I'd known, dead to—"

He stopped. Should I finish the sentence for him? Silently I did so:

"—dead to the woman I loved."



Captain Jones rose and stared out of the air-port.

"Are we sticking to the usual course or going out of the way to avoid trouble?" I inquired.

He turned his sallow face to me. "I was trying to decide that question," he answered.

Aloud I remarked: "I understand! You're tired of trying to explain pure hard luck. But why this position on the *Cerulean*?"



I leaned over, just in time to see the *Cerulean's* commander take a revolver from his pocket, level it at the man's head and fire. I was still staring when Tommy's fingers squeezed my arm, and his oddly tense voice said in my ear: "By gad, they've got us!"

"I'm needed—all of us are needed," he said simply. "Besides, I figured that maybe I'd have a chance to prove to myself I wasn't always in the wrong. I may be able to justify myself."

"And show the men who—"

"Show myself," he interrupted. "What do I care about the men over there on the Coast, those passengers who swore I didn't know my business, the gossips in Seattle, the tattlers alongshore? No. I merely wish to assure myself that I am equal to an emergency."

"And there's nobody you—er—hope to persuade that you're a misjudged man?" I demanded.

"Not a soul," he returned.

"But Tommy Edwards seems to have implicit confidence in you now."

"Don't tell him a word," Jones insisted. "A young chap with all before him. A proper sailor-man, too. He wouldn't understand."

I gave my word and kept Slack-Lime Jones' confidence. Tommy was up to see me a moment before sailing.

"The skipper got a letter telling him the submarines would get us this time," he told me amiably. "Consequently, my boy, I expect we'll get mighty little sleep this trip. See you later!"

"A word, Tommy," I said. "Tell me why you seem to trust Slack-Lime Jones so fully."

"Simple," was the answer. "Old Jones always pulled his ships and his people out of pickle, but he never could explain how he did it—or if he did try, nobody would believe him. Now, if we escape the submarines, it'll be by a scheme that nobody ever thought of,—the Germans think of everything before you do,—and ten to one it'll be by a maneuver that nobody can justify. Ames—good old soul—will do exactly what a real, true-blue experienced skipper *is expected to do*. But Jones—I'll bank on him! So long!"

Unheralded, the *Cerulean* put to sea and vanished from my ken. But during the next two weeks I often pondered Tommy Edwards' final, jovial explanation of his faith in the luckless star of Slack-Lime Jones. Back of his youth-

invaded my flat once more, inextinguishably hungry. He gave me to understand that for four weeks he had eaten little or nothing and slept a scant hour.

"Submarines?" I asked.

"Plenty of 'em," he replied. "Drove old Ames into a frenzy. When we docked on the other side, he couldn't even make his report. So they put a new skipper on the bridge, and we romped home in eight days."

"Who's the new commander?"

Tommy leaned back luxuriously and reached for his pipe. "Jones," he said briefly. "Slack-Lime Jones."

I was astonished and said so, referring to the fact that he, Thomas Edwards, ranked Mr. Jones, and that it was an extraordinary matter, to say the least, to find a third officer of unknown antecedents put in command of a big steamship. Tommy waved this aside.

"It was nip and tuck between the chief officer and a chap who'd just got in after losing his ship in the Mediterranean," he told me. "But a couple of the big guns came down and ate their chow in the main cabin and stared at us all and picked out Jones. Quite simple! Ames recommended him."

"What astounding luck!" I ejaculated. Then I said: "You told me you had a great deal of confidence in Jones. Why? You know his history."

"Part of it," replied Tommy. "Just enough to be pretty sure. Ames was sure. And those toplofties who put him in command of the *Cerulean* must have been hanged near absolutely certain."

"Of what?" I cried.

Tommy glanced at me with provoking coolness. "That Jones would get the *Cerulean* home again."

"But he's going to take her across again!"

"Then," said Thomas, "they're pretty sure he'll get her across safely."

"But why are they sure?" I demanded.

"I told you once that Slack-Lime Jones never could explain—at least didn't—how he saved his sundry ships but lost his ticket. That's the answer to the enigma. The Germans have thought out everything human beings *can* think of beforehand. When a submarine turns up and halts you, you're absolutely certain there's no luck about it. Now, Captain Jones has always succeeded by doing the thing

that looked foolish in the chilly
air of a courtroom. The
result was that he lost
out the minute he
set foot



ful confidence there must be, I argued, a profound basis, something at once convincing and simple. Modern seamen of the type don't pin their faith to fantasies or trust to other than highly scientific methods.

A month later Tommy

ashore.
Now he'll win out because the only way to beat the sub-

marines is to do what no seaman in his senses

would dream of doing." He puffed at his nearly extinct pipe. "It makes it interesting to be with Captain Jones."

That individual himself paid me a call the next day. He was the same shadowy kind of creature as before, accepted my congratulations modestly and seemed to have other business on his mind. At last it came out: he hoped I would make the voyage with him.

Easily enough I advanced the difficulty of getting a passport, of gaining permission from the line, and capped it all by saying that I was aware I wouldn't be allowed ashore on the other side.

"I can fix all that," he told me with a vague air of distress. "I can fix everything but the danger. But I take it you hardly count that."

What could I do? I accepted the invitation and three days later found myself installed in Captain Jones' own cabin.

"I sha'n't have much use for it," he told me. "Make yourself at home."

The following morning at breakfast my host seemed quite at ease. He loafed around the cabin, dipped into a novel, received various reports with a preoccupied air and finally suggested a game of cards. We played for an hour, and then Captain Jones rose and stared out of the air-port at the sea through which we were steaming at a fair speed.

"Are we sticking to the usual course or going out of the way to avoid trouble?" I inquired.

Jones turned his sallow face to me. His rather dull eyes held a flickering amusement in their depths.

"I was trying to decide that question," he answered. "It's a rather complicated one. Of course, I've my instructions."

"Orders?" I suggested.

"Are they orders?" he mused. "I might consider them as such and trust to luck. If a torpedo

sank us, I could refer to 'em and go clear. On the other hand, I'm in command of this steamship, and my instructions, presumably, are to fetch her into British waters, where a pilot will take over the responsibility. Under ordinary circumstances I'd strictly follow the owners' suggestions. But the circumstances aren't ordinary."

"Have you no orders to meet certain patrol-vessels?"

Jones smiled faintly. "I don't doubt but that certain patrol vessels have orders to meet us," he answered. "On the other hand, it strikes me that our German friends very likely have *their* orders—probably based on mine. If I'm to avoid being sunk, it is my place to escape being caught by a submarine. Now, the commander of the submarine gets his orders from a certain man. That man may very well have a hint of what my instructions are—may even know what orders the British Admiralty has given for guarding us. But he can't possibly know what I'm going to do."

"He'll suppose you'll obey your instructions."

"It will be incomprehensible to him that I shouldn't obey," Captain Jones returned. "So there's my chance, isn't it?"

"But if you go your own course and—and are sunk, what then?"

"Not I," Slack-Lime concluded. "I reckoned I'd better stay dead—dead to the inspectors, dead to the men I'd known, dead to—"



My host looked vaguely troubled. "It would never be satisfactorily explained," he responded. "They'd come down on me for disobedience and blame the whole thing on me. And yet—my only chance is to fool the commander of the submarine fleet. See?"

"It's a frightful risk," I murmured. "Like as not they'd hang you if you survived. I'm sure they'd allege you were a traitor. And besides that, the Admiralty has made its plans with reference to the *Cerulean* being in one particular part of the Atlantic at certain times. Probably the loss or the salvation of this ship would be very little compared to throwing their plans adrift."

"Dear me!" said Captain Jones, fidgeting with the heavy curtain at the air-port. "Nobody even intimated they gave a hang about us; you've no idea how matter-of-fact they were in handing me my instructions—as much as to say: Here you are, Cap'n. Don't worry about anything."

"Well?"

"That's all," he told me. "But when you come right down to it, I'm master of this ship, and it's up to me to get her safely across. We've six millions aboard, and four hundred mechanics who're badly needed at the front."

Here he abandoned the discussion and, I supposed, his rash scheme to deceive the submarines. He did not refer to the subject again, and nothing that I gleaned from the conversation of Tommy Edwards or his brother officers gave me any hint that the *Cerulean* wasn't trundling along through the heaving Atlantic as per instructions.

There may have been some apprehension and excitement among the involuntary passengers on the steamer; they were drilled often enough in abandoning ship, Heaven knows. But I can say with assurance that the officers and crew took each day as it came. The chief officer allowed no slackening in keeping his vessel clean; Tommy worked up his

reckonings and plotted his courses as if he were bound on an ordinary voyage; and the chief steward, like all stewards the world over, planned his meals and harried his cooks and castigated his boys without thought of the morrow when our voyage might come to an abrupt close. Yet there was an imperceptible gathering of clouds, so to speak. It became noticeable one afternoon when the third officer, a solemn and ponderous young man without humor, asked Tommy whether we should dock by Wednesday noon next.

It was a fair question. Tommy flushed, scowled and replied curtly that he didn't know. The third stared at him, shook his head and opined that it was the first time he'd known such an answer to be given an honest question.

To me Tommy confided that he was grievously in the dark himself. "I suppose the old man has said something to you?" he suggested.

I shook my head, thereby stopping further confidences. But I made occasion to speak to Jones later.

"The fact of the matter is," that shadowy person said, "I've managed to lock up the chronometers. I believe I'm safe in saying that nobody on board this vessel knows any time but sea-time. Mr. Edwards takes his sights

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by the clock in the chart-house, and I work my own reckonings. Naturally the officers have a good notion of our daily run and can figure out what course we've made good within a narrow margin. But as to exactly where the *Cerulean* is, I'm the only man who knows."

"But if—if anything happened to you?"

"It wouldn't take the man who took my place half an hour to know everything he needed to know," Jones replied. "But I can trust Mr. Edwards not to inquire too closely till there is necessity." He stared at me as though his eyes were dim. "I can take risks another man would hesitate to take, you see. Then I'm absolutely at liberty to use my own judgment. As a matter of fact, there isn't a soul I can consult, for nobody but I knows the exact situation."

Thus far enlightened, I was, of course, free to talk with Tommy. He glowered and checked himself.

"You still trust him?" I demanded.

The youth threw off his ugly mood. "Of course I do," he said generously. "Look at the risks the man takes! His only justification will be to fetch into port unharmed. And if we don't—not one of us subordinates can be blamed."

"And what do you think of our chances?" I inquired.

Tommy laughed. "Mighty poor! We've picked up the calls of three steamers sinking and one being chased. Of course we didn't answer them or change our course. That's flat orders. But if I'm any judge, one of them wasn't twenty miles south of us last night. Only twenty miles—and we didn't dare drop down and pick up the survivors!"

"Then you think we are on the course laid down for us before we sailed?"

"How do I know?" he responded. "I didn't see the orders, and I've only a vague notion where we are now. I hope the submarines are as much in the dark as I am!"

The next morning at dawn Captain Jones sent a man to rouse me. I rolled out and went up on the bridge. A glance at the engine-room signal-dials showed me we were going full speed ahead. The sea was a heavy one, and the steamer shook as she plunged onward to the thrust of her twin screws. I saw that the chief officer, Tommy and the third were present, while junior officers stood to leeward and searched the misty expanse with their glasses. Captain Jones nodded to me and pointed overside, with a short, decisive gesture. I looked down and saw a raffle of wreckage floating on the big, spumy rollers. It floated out of the haze in an endless stream, the débris of a big steamer and its cargo. Deck-chairs lolloped lazily along, accompanied by empty fruit-crates. Here and there a larger bulk would topple into view, circle about its own axis in a solemn manner, be recognizable as a roll of bedding and so vanish down the vague vista. Once or twice I thought I saw a human form riding amid the stream. I could not be sure.

"They got her," I remarked with a shudder.

"The *Council Bluffs*," Jones said quietly. "We heard her call for assistance at midnight."

"Then—"

Jones nodded. "I altered the course and ran down the position she gave."

"And the submarine?"

He shook his head. "Naturally she's not here, wherever she may be. I fancy we shall see a destroyer presently. The *Council Bluffs* called some time."

"Now, if I were the German commander of the submarine," I remarked, "right here or hereabouts is where I'd stay. If he has imagination—"

I didn't finish. Jones' eyes had focused on something in the barely seen foreground, and he jerked up the speaking-tube.

"Every turn you can get out of your engines, chief!" he cried into the brass trumpet.

A murmur went up, and I saw every man on the bridge stirring. From forward came a low, distinct voice:

"Small-boat on the starb'd bow, sir!"

"One of the *Council Bluffs*'s, sir," said the chief officer with finality. But Captain Jones did not answer. Instead he peered over at the rocking craft, listened to the torrent of cries that poured up from it and straightened up with a faint smile on his face.

"Well," he said slowly, "so much to the good. One submarine behind us."

Tommy came over and squeezed my arm. "By gad, did you ever see a boatload of decoys get left? Those Germans didn't count on the old man going them one better. They figured out that he or some one else would drop down to pick up a few of the *Council Bluffs*' crew, but he never counted on our old man's sizing up the situation and merely making sure that the submarine was behind us. And as we're making a good nineteen knots and can keep up the gait, she'll stay behind us, rest assured."

This incident, of course, made clear the exact position of the *Cerulean*. But it made it no plainer than before whether Jones was keeping to the course laid down for him or taking his own.

"Anyway, we're exactly six hundred and ninety miles from our port," said Tommy. "And the Germans know where we are! Now comes the fun!"

"Thomas," I said sternly, "this is no time for joking. Bigger than any question of submarines looms the query in my mind: why am I in this ship?"

He laughed. "Didn't the skipper tell you? No? Well, the Captain asked me quite a bit about you, and I told him you used to be a sailor and that you still were interested, though you lived ashore. It gave him an idea. 'Some day he'll go back to the Coast,' he said, 'and he can give them the news about us.' So you're aboard the *Cerulean* as a kind of next friend—to do the epitaph, you know, explain the *Hic jacet's* of this special cruise."

Tommy was making comedy of the matter, but I thought I perceived a faint light on the character of Slack-Lime Jones. He could willingly be thought dead, but he hoped that his second career might not wholly lack an applauding chronicler. I put it up to him himself, and he acknowledged that I "might be valuable in the way of making matters clear"—what matters, he left to surmise and the future. I wonder if he knew.

At nine o'clock the next morning we on the *Cerulean* realized that we were in a trap. Ahead of us some forty miles the *Edinboro Castle* breathed her dying warning into the air. Some eighty miles northeast a Swedish tramp was



He stopped.
Should I finish the sentence? Silently I did so: "—dead to the woman I loved." DS

also vainly calling for help, and not twenty miles away and to the south'ard we saw a vast pillar of smoke, signal that still another ship was perishing. Which-ever way we turned we should infallibly run into the enemy. "If there was only a fog or a mist," sighed Tommy. "And it's a perfect August day. They can see us for miles around."

"They can't catch us," I said bravely.

"Oh, no! Certainly not!" he replied sarcastically. "No chance of that!"

The only undisturbed person—by this time the passengers had heard a little of the news—was Captain Jones. He gathered what information he could from the wireless-room, made his calculations and spoke briefly with the commander of the gun-crew. That businesslike personage, wearily dapper, grinned and departed. Then the chief engineer ascended from the depths to hold confab, brief and plain. We were going to run for it.

"Of course," Jones remarked to me quietly, "there is a flotilla of those sharks around. One may break the surface any time. On the other hand, we're within the patrol-lines, and a destroyer's just as likely to turn up and escort us in."

"If it's not impertinent," said I, "I'd like to know whether we're on the course your instructions ordered."

"No," he answered, "we're on the course the *Council Bluffs* was to have taken. I figured it out long ago. She's gone, and if the German spies did their work well, the submarines will never dream of a second vessel's traversing the exact course she was told to take. Also they'll have news that she was caught, and so they won't be looking for us. The decoys in that small-boat recognized us and undoubtedly followed us when they got back to their submarine just long enough to observe that we apparently returned to our old course. I may be wrong, and luck may hold against me."



Jones' vaguely elderly face was lighted by a faint smile. "It's so much better to keep on at full speed and leave the final decision to the event," he added, and he dropped into an easier attitude against the rail. "Captain Ames wore himself and all the others to a bone by slowing up and having to look all around the horizon. We've got nothing to fear except what's directly ahead of us. No submarine can catch us; I doubt very much whether a torpedo could be aimed to strike us except from a very short distance, and then—we have our chance!"

"What chance?" I idly inquired.

"This," said Jones, stepping past me to the wheel and giving it a twirl to port.

The *Cerulean* lifted on a big roller, swung swiftly in an arc and buried her bows deep in foam. Just ahead of us I saw a long, dusky bulk lift out of the sea and develop into the familiar form we dreaded. And almost at the same instant something opened up and a shot shrilled across the interval and thumped into us near the stem.

"The *Council Bluffs* was an eleven-knot packet," Jones said over his shoulder. "We're making twenty-one. Watch the fellow!"

That single shot was all the submarine fired. I fancy her commander miscalculated our distance and speed,—a very easy matter from his position dead ahead,—and now he saw he must submerge or be run down. The great bulk settled swiftly in foam and vanished. We thundered over the spot thirty seconds afterward. And while we slashed that field of foam, I confess my heart stopped beating. What if we struck the submarine and exploded

her cargo of torpedoes? But nothing happened, and Captain Jones relinquished the wheel to the quartermaster and asked in a matter-of-fact voice what damage the shot had done. It appeared that it had struck into a cable-locker and done little hurt.

But it shortly appeared that a damage far deeper than any that shot or shell could inflict had been done. What our

commander and we justly looked upon as a feat did not appear in that light to our passengers.

Some of them had witnessed the whole af-

fair, and it was

public property that the *Cerulean*, when she was quite safe, had been again imperiled by her cap-

tain in an effort to ram and destroy the submarine.

"Right is right," announced the spokesman for the cabin people. "This steamship is

neither a cruiser nor a cargo-boat. (Continued on page 108)



Wheaton shouted truthfully: "I never hoed!" "I'll show you how," said Peter. "It don't call for much intellect."

In the GOOD OLD SUMMER-TIME

*The story of a man whose ego hurt
him and a girl whose feet hurt her*

By IDA M. EVANS

ACROSS the amber-lighted table in the choicest corner of the glowing restaurant, Frederick Wheaton tossed a genial but amused smile while he clipped a cigar-end with the meticulous nicety due its fifty-cent brown leafage.

"Oh, come, that's rich!"

"Indeed!" On the other side of the table Lelita le Lonne dabbled her little thin white fingers viciously in the scented finger-bowl and repeated crossly: "Honestly! Some nights I'm so tired I can't sleep. Dancing eight hours a day in a cabaret is good hard work, though a lot of folks"—resentfully—"have an idea it's a nice dream or a joke."

"G'wan!" jeered Wheaton. "Think of the poor girls standing all day in department-stores who'd give their best lung to step into your pink satin slippers every afternoon and evening at the Café Dansant."

Lelita sniffed.

"If any salesgirl's feet ache more than mine do, I'd like to see 'em," she declared irritably.

Then, with real or affected weariness, she crossed her forearms—very small and daintily white forearms—on the table and over them regarded Frederick Wheaton, big, blond, blond, with plaintive blue eyes.

Her long black lashes swept those eyes like lovely silk fringes, and the amber lights gave her delicate complexion a velvet texture. But Frederick Wheaton, behind the gray cloud of his big cigar's smoke, smiled derisively.

Illustrated by
R. F. JAMES

"That'll do to tell!"

"You're perfectly unfeeling," she snapped. "But"—with a real or affected sigh of utter wistfulness—"how can you understand? All the year round—except when you're traveling for pleasure!—you do nothing harder than loll around in those horribly well-tufted mahogany chairs of your real-estate office and sign a deed or an abstract that brings you in a thousand dollars or more—"

"You exaggerate some. Sometimes it's only nine hundred," he laughed.

"I'd like never to dance again," sighed Lelita, not looking at him now. "I'd like to loll around home—my own home—in a nice tufted wicker rocker, in a little dining-room—or sun-parlor—and have a white-aproned maid and a laundress, and wear house-slippers instead of pink dancing—"

Behind the cigar-smoke Wheaton's smile took on a tinge of cynicism. He knew exactly what was going on in the pretty little black head opposite him. Oh, exactly! He had known for some time. Silly little Lelita!

When that little lady talked about wanting her own home, she meant home with Frederick Wheaton. Her eyes said very eloquently what her lips did not add. So—

"All the home that appeals to me," remarked Frederick Wheaton with ostentatious carelessness, "is a club, a taxi and a Turkish bathroom." He grinned lightly at his own wit. "From what I've seen when visiting my friends,

home's usually a darned uncomfortable place—not at all like it's pictured on the stage or in magazines. To get the comforts of home, you have to go some place else."

It was blunt. As wit it was cheap. The man himself felt that.

Lelita's long black lashes went down suddenly, close over her eyes. She bit her short red upper lip.

But as a matter of fact, Frederick Wheaton meant it, in a way, very kindly. He admitted to himself that he was fond of little shallow Lelita. For some two years now he had been fond of her. But as a wife—

No, she didn't appeal to him in that way. He had an idea a man might become very, very weary of her little snappy ways and blue eyes. But he was too fond of her to let her keep on hoping. That was the way he phrased it to himself.

"Well, I've got to go," she said pettishly a little later. "I'm due in twenty minutes, and I've got to dry-clean a pair of slippers before I start to dance."

"I'll send you a half a dozen new pairs to-morrow," he said instantly.

"If you do, I'll throw 'em into the street," said Lelita instantly, with too bright eyes.

Frederick Wheaton suppressed a smile. He knew that she would do no such thing. She would wear 'em. After he put her into a taxi for the *Café Dansant*, he ordered them—two white, two pink, two palest blue, adding one gold-iridescent pair for good measure.

Then he strolled leisurely to the next street, where stood the big marble-foyered building holding his office suite.

Coming out of the elevator on his floor, the sixteenth, he met a well-built, trimly handsome woman in her early thirties—brown-eyed, clever-eyed, successful-eyed, also tailor-garbed and carrying a sleek brown-leather legal bag. Frederick Wheaton's hat came off deferentially, and his bland gray eyes instantly took on a certain gleam that little Lelita le Lonne had never glimpsed in them.

Miss Marcia London, lawyer,—the door of her outer office opened directly opposite Wheaton's real-estate suite,—nodded cordially as she got into a descending elevator. "Too hot to work," she smiled. "I'm off to the country club."

Wheaton's glance after her shapely, well-carried form was calculative. He knew very well indeed that Miss London's legal success never gave her that successful, assured look. Back of it stood a father and grandfather of stocks and bonds. And an elder brother was president of the very select country

club to which she was on her way. It was just as well for Lelita's vanity that she could never know that just now Frederick Wheaton was mentally calculating Marcia London's points of desirability, as a wife, in comparison with her own. Clever, of good family, assured, good-looking, a woman whom a man would relish introducing to his friends—well, he admitted pleasantly to himself, home depends! It certainly depends!

A faint smile, blended of pity and superciliousness, flitted across his face. Poor Lelita! It was not her fault, of course, that back of her whimpering attitude toward life stood only a succession of more or less frowsy landladies!

Still smiling faintly, Wheaton entered his office and seated himself leisurely at his wide flat-topped mahogany desk. It was a handsome desk; it was a handsome office—one of a handsome suite. Intentionally was it a handsome suite—and not altogether because Mr. Frederick Wheaton reveled in sumptuous surroundings, either!

In these versatile United States of America real estate is a grand old game, and Frederick Wheaton was admittedly one of the best players professionally known. It was his brag and other folks' admission that he could sell any piece of soil on which an option or a quitclaim deed could find a pebble to stand on. This, he consciously and complacently acknowledged, was not because he knew soil or soils. Since his birth-year, asphalt had lain between his soles and his mother earth. His ancestry had been concerned mostly with ward politics. He was city-born, city-reared, city-habited and possibly city-hard—or city-soft. He had merely a hazy idea of what land-tenure really meant. He had no idea that Henry George stood for anything but a cigar. He had never heard, even remotely, of Herbert Spencer's *Statics*. But he had the magnetic, hypnotic, despotic personality that differentiates from a mere man the promoter or the successful seller of real estate, urban, suburban or heavenly.

As easily as his shapely forefinger went down a real-estate-for-sale column of newspaper, so easily did the tentacles of this persuasive personality of his reach out and around all power of judgment on the part of would-be buyer or seller. Many who have left a tolerable city home for a lovingly advertised chicken-farm, or gone from a black-soil quarter-section for a frame flat-building in a distant city know all about such a personality. And in justice to Frederick Wheaton it must be

added that he also had, beside the tentacles of persuasion, the cool insolence of soul that is very little worried by after-criticism or complaint.



She scolded fervidly: "How do you suppose I'd feel with you taken to jail?"



"G'wan!" jeered Wheaton. "Think of the poor girls standing all day in department-stores who'd give their best lung to step into your pink satin slippers at the *Café Dansant*."

And this afternoon when from the letters his stenographer laid before him he drew one postmarked "Michigan" and addressed in the cramped writing of an evidently unaccustomed hand, he grinned composedly as he read that Peter Banns and his brother Herman, two years ago in a delicatessen shop, Chicago, now of a forty-four-acre truck farm, Michigan, were mightily dissatisfied with their purchase and wanted to "git their money back." As he idly tossed the letter to the wastebasket, the ex-

pression in his bland gray eyes was very like the one there when over the amber-lighted luncheon-table he had bluntly and composedly let Lelita know that home with her as home-keeper didn't appeal to him. Foolish Peter Banns and brother Herman! He grinned faintly again. Didn't they know that buyers are keepers, even if weepers?

The day was warm. May, usually a docile month, had turned suffragist, it seemed, and borrowed one of her older sister August's murky diurnal banners to fling it defiantly

over a suffering Loop. Before Wheaton slit open another envelope, he rose and adjusted the electric fan so that a delicate breeze could play over his shoulders, which were so unpleasantly moist that his mauve-striped silk shirt was about to glue itself to the leather tufts of the big back of his chair.

Then he read the letter, and with interest. It too was postmarked "Michigan" and in the sprawly writing of an evidently unaccustomed hand. William Deirson had four hundred acres that he desired to sell, in the northern part of the State. He was an old man and tired of the exacting farm-life—so tired, he added pathetically, that even if the mineral rights proved to be worth much, he'd not ask much, or reserve them.

Over that hint "mineral rights" Frederick Wheaton's bland gray eyes narrowed calculatingly—very much indeed as they had narrowed in the appraising glance sent after Marcia London as she stepped into the elevator. To the initiated "mineral rights" has an unctuous sound. Of such, when not reserved, are sometimes vast riches coined. He called his stenographer to take a courteous letter of reply to William Deirson, asking for more particulars of the four hundred.

Then he sent his office-boy to the buffet of the building, seventeen floors below, for a tall glass of iced claret-lemonade. Having sipped it slowly, as bulwark against the murkiness of the warm day, he decided languidly that it was really too warm to hang about an office. So he motored out to the country club where Marcia London had gone before him.

Of Peter Banns and Peter's brother Herman, Wheaton did not think again for some three weeks. And then, oddly enough, it happened to be Lelita le Lonne who reminded him of them. She had thanked him coldly for the slippers.

"Dear girl, it was worth buying them to see your pretty feet wearing them," he suavely assured her.

In the past Miss le Lonne had usually responded to such bland little sentences with a satisfied little smile. But this day she sighed, with real or affected weariness, and said irritably: "My pretty feet are mighty tired of wearing slippers. They'd like, instead,"—in low voice,—"to paddle around in old flat-heeled shoes."

"What's the idea?" laughed Wheaton as he ran zealous gray eyes down over the restaurant's menu-card. "Yes, you would!"

Very pettishly Lelita protested that she was telling the truth—indeed she was! She had heard the call of the soil.

"That so?" There was a fleck of malice in Wheaton's grin. "Well, I know of a piece of land you can get cheap. Peter Banns, up in Michigan—"

Oh, nothing like that, irritably informed Lelita. A small piece of soil, situated behind a—she leaned her small white elbows on the table and cupped her small face prettily in her two palms, and she gazed appealingly at big, bland Frederick Wheaton while she went on to de-

scribe it—situated behind a nice little bungalow at the edge of Chicago itself, where she could merely raise a few dear little radishes and some onions and endive and be happy—and—

Her soft, tired voice wavered into silence. Her long black-silk lashes fell with real or affected diffidence over her eloquent eyes.

Frederick Wheaton, seeing, hearing, comprehending, smiled dryly as he gulped a Martini. "Nothing like that for me," said he wryly. "The only soil that calls to me is the smooth green turf of a golf-course."

"Truly?" she demanded in a low voice.

"Quite truly!"

With real or affected distaste she suddenly pushed away the salad that was the chief part of her luncheon. Frederick Wheaton finished his chop expeditiously and mentally came to the decision that the habit that he had formed of lunching twice a week with Lelita might as well be broken.

He did not want to hurt her, and so he did not look at her while he asked lightly: "Why don't you marry that old Benster who haunts the Café Dansant and evidently adores you? He owns a brewery, so he could buy you all the bungalows—"

"I—I don't want to marry him! He—he has asked me though!"

"Well,"—Wheaton rose,—"sorry, girly. I have to rush off from you to-day." And then his eyes narrowed with decision. Right now was as good a time as any to break. "And—and I may not see you for some time. I'm going up to northern Michigan to look over some land for sale—

four hundred acres. And I may stay on for several weeks if the fishing is good."

"Oh—are you?" Either Lelita was an actress or none. Affected or irrepressible dismay quavered in her low voice. "But you phone me as soon as you get back?"

"Sure," he promised lightly.

As a matter of fact, he had no intention of being out of town over the two or three days necessary to run up and get, at bargain price, William Deirson's land.

It was just as well for Lelita's vanity, or heart, that she could not know this, or know, either, that an hour or so after putting her small self in a taxi he had sauntered into Marcia London's office and told that older, more assured young woman that he would be out of town some weeks—in order that he might in this way learn indirectly if she would care

about the length of his absence.

"I hope you'll enjoy your vacation," was all she had to comment.

Frederick Wheaton grinned, going out of her office, at his own discomfiture. Well, he preferred a woman who didn't wear her heart on her handsome brown sleeve!

Silly Lelita! Frederick Wheaton sincerely hoped that she would marry old Benster. (Continued on page 111)



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page 111)



IT was the Flying-up Moon, deep and slumbering mid-summer, in all the land of Keewatin. From Hudson Bay to the Athabasca, and from the Height of Land to the edge of the Great Barrens, forest, plain and swamp lay in peace and forgetfulness under the sun-glowing days and the star-filled nights of the August *Mukoo-Sawin*. It was the breeding moon, the growing moon, the moon when all wild life came into its own once more. For the trails of this wilderness world, so vast that it reached a thousand miles east and west, and as far north and south, were empty of human life. At the Hudson's Bay Company's posts scattered here and there over the illimitable domain of fang and claw, had gathered the thousands of hunters and trappers with their wives and children, to sleep and gossip and play through the few weeks of warmth and plenty until the strife and tragedy of another winter began.

For these people of the forests it was *Mukoo-Sawin*—the great play-day of the year, the weeks in which they ran up new debts and established new credits at the posts, the weeks in which they forgathered at every post as at a great fair, playing and making love and marrying, and fattening up for the many days of hunger and gloom to come.

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WE know of no better reading for this time than these stories by Mr. Curwood. They take you into the Great Outdoors and show you the joy and the humor of animal life, which have never before been written, but which are very real and very delightful.

This is the fifth of the stories of
The BABY NOMADS
of the NORTH

There will be another in each of the next five issues.

The LONG SLEEP

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

Illustrated by
CHARLES LIVINGSTON BULL

It was because of this that the wild things had come fully into the possession of their world for a space. There was no longer the scent of man in all the wilderness. They were not hunted. There were no traps laid for their feet, no poison-baits placed temptingly where they might pass. In the fens and on the lakes the wild-fowl squawked and honked unfearing to their young just learning the power of wing; the lynx played with her kittens without sniffing the air for the menace of man; the moose went openly into the cool water of the lakes with their calves; the wolverene and the marten ran playfully over the roofs of deserted shacks and cabins; the beaver and the otter tumbled and frolicked in their dark pools, and the birds sang, and through all the wilderness there was the drone and song of nature as some Great Power must at first have meant that nature should be.

A new generation of wild things had been born. It was a season of youth, with tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of little children of the wild playing their first play, learning their first lessons, growing up swiftly to face the menace and doom of their first winter. And the Beneficent Spirit of the forests, anticipating what was to come, had prepared well for them. Everywhere there was plenty. The blueberries, the blackberries, the mountain-ash and the saskatoons were ripe; tree and vine were bent low with their burden of fruit. The grass was green and tender from the summer rains. Bulbous roots were fairly popping out of the earth; the fens and the edges of the lakes were rich with things to eat; overhead and underfoot the horn of plenty was emptying itself.

In this world Neewa, the black-bear cub, and Brimstone, the Mackenzie hound pup, found a vast and unending contentment. They lay, on this August afternoon, on a sun-bathed shelf of rock that overlooked a wonderful valley. Neewa, stuffed with luscious blueberries, was asleep. Brimstone's eyes were only partly closed as he looked down into the soft haze of the valley. Up to him came the rippling music of the stream running between the rocks and over the pebbly bars below, and with it the soft and languorous drone of the valley itself. Perhaps the vast contentment of this moment sent Brimstone's mind back to the beginning of things—to his master Challoner, to the day when Challoner brought in

Neewa, the motherless cub, and tied them together on the same bit of rope, and to that other day when they had fallen out of Challoner's canoe, and plunging together over the waterfall, had begun that wonderful adventure which was not yet ended, and which had made of them brothers and comrades. There was a great deal to think about, if Brimstone was thinking at all. They had passed through amazing adventures. They had fought for their lives; they had almost died of starvation; day by day they had won their way together until now, when paradise lay about them.

Perhaps Brimstone, as he closed his eyes, was thinking of their first fight with the great owls in the forest, for he growled sleepily. Or it may be that in half-dream he saw again the great battle between Maheegun, the she-wolf, and the two winged monsters who died in the defense of their meat—the dead caribou bull; or it might be that he recalled a memory of the atrocious drubbing he had received at the hands—or claws—of Oochak, the fisher-cat. So long as he lived he would never forget Oochak because of that thrashing; and also he would never forget the night after that whipping when he had crept into the camp of Makoki and the white man, whom he had mistaken for Challoner, and who in turn had mistaken him for a young wolf and had nearly killed him with a club. He never wanted to see a man again, unless, perhaps, it was his old master. He was satisfied—with Neewa and their wonderful world.

Anyway, he napped uneasily for half an hour; and then his eyes opened, and he was wide awake. He took a sharp look over the valley. Then he looked at Neewa. The cub, fat and lazy, would have slept until dark. It was always Brimstone who kept him on the move. And now the pup barked at him gruffly two or three times and then nipped at one of his ears.

"Wake up!" he might have said. "What's the sense of sleeping on a day like this? Let's go down along the creek and hunt something."

Neewa roused himself, stretched his fat body and yawned. Sleepily his little eyes took in the valley. Brimstone got up and gave the low and anxious whine which always told his companion that he wanted to be on the move. Neewa responded, and they began making their way down the green slope into the rich bottom between the two ridges.

They were now almost six months of age, and in the matter of size had nearly ceased

to be a cub and a pup. They were almost a dog and a bear. Brimstone's angular legs were getting their shape; his chest had filled out; his neck had grown until it no longer seemed too small for his big head and jaws; and his body had increased in girth and length until he was twice as big as ordinary dogs of his age. Neewa had lost his round, ball-like cubishness, though he still betrayed far more than Brimstone the fact that he was not many months lost from his mother. But he was no longer possessed of that wholesome love of peace that had filled his earlier cubhood. The blood of Soominikit, his battle-scarred old father, was at last beginning to assert itself, and he no longer sought a place of safety in time of battle—unless the grimness of utter necessity made it unavoidable. In fact, unlike most bears, he loved a fight.

If there was a stronger expression at hand, it might be applied to Brimstone, the true son of Hela, the giant hunting-hound. Youthful as they were, they were already covered with scars that would have made a veteran proud. Crows and owls, wolf-fang and fisher-claw, had all left their marks, and on Brimstone's side was a bare space eight inches long left as a souvenir by a wolverene. In Neewa's funny round head there had grown, during the course of events, an ambition to have it out some day with a citizen of his own kind; but the two opportunities that had come his way were spoiled by the fact that the other cubs' mothers were with them. So now when the pup led off on his trips of adventure, Neewa always followed with another thrill than that of getting something to eat, which so long had been his one ambition.

This is not to say that Neewa had lost his appetite. He could eat more in one day than Brimstone could eat in three, mainly because the dog was satisfied with two or three meals a day, while Neewa preferred one—a continuous one lasting from dawn until dark. On the trail he was always eating something.

A quarter of a mile along the foot of the ridge, in a stony coulée down which a tiny rivulet trickled, there

grew the finest wild currants in all the Shamattawa country. Big as cherries, black as ink, and swelling almost to the bursting-point with luscious juice, they hung in clusters so thick that Neewa could gather them by the mouthful. Nothing in all the wilderness is quite so good as one of these dead-ripe black currants, and this coulée wherein they grew so richly Neewa had pre-empted as his own personal property. Brimstone likewise had learned to eat the currants; so to the coulée they went this afternoon, for such currants as these one can eat even when one is already full. Besides, the coulée was fruitful for Brimstone in other ways. There were many rabbits and young partridges in it—"fool hens" of tender flesh and delicious flavor which he caught quite easily, and any number of gophers and squirrels.

To-day they had scarcely taken their first mouthful of the big juicy currants when an unmistakable sound came to them—unmistakable because each recognized instantly what it meant. It was the tearing down of currant bushes twenty or thirty yards higher up the coulée. Some robber had invaded their treasure-house, and instantly Brimstone bared his fangs, while Neewa wrinkled up his nose in a snarl. Soft-footed they advanced toward the sound until they came to the edge of a small open



He was alone—
alone!

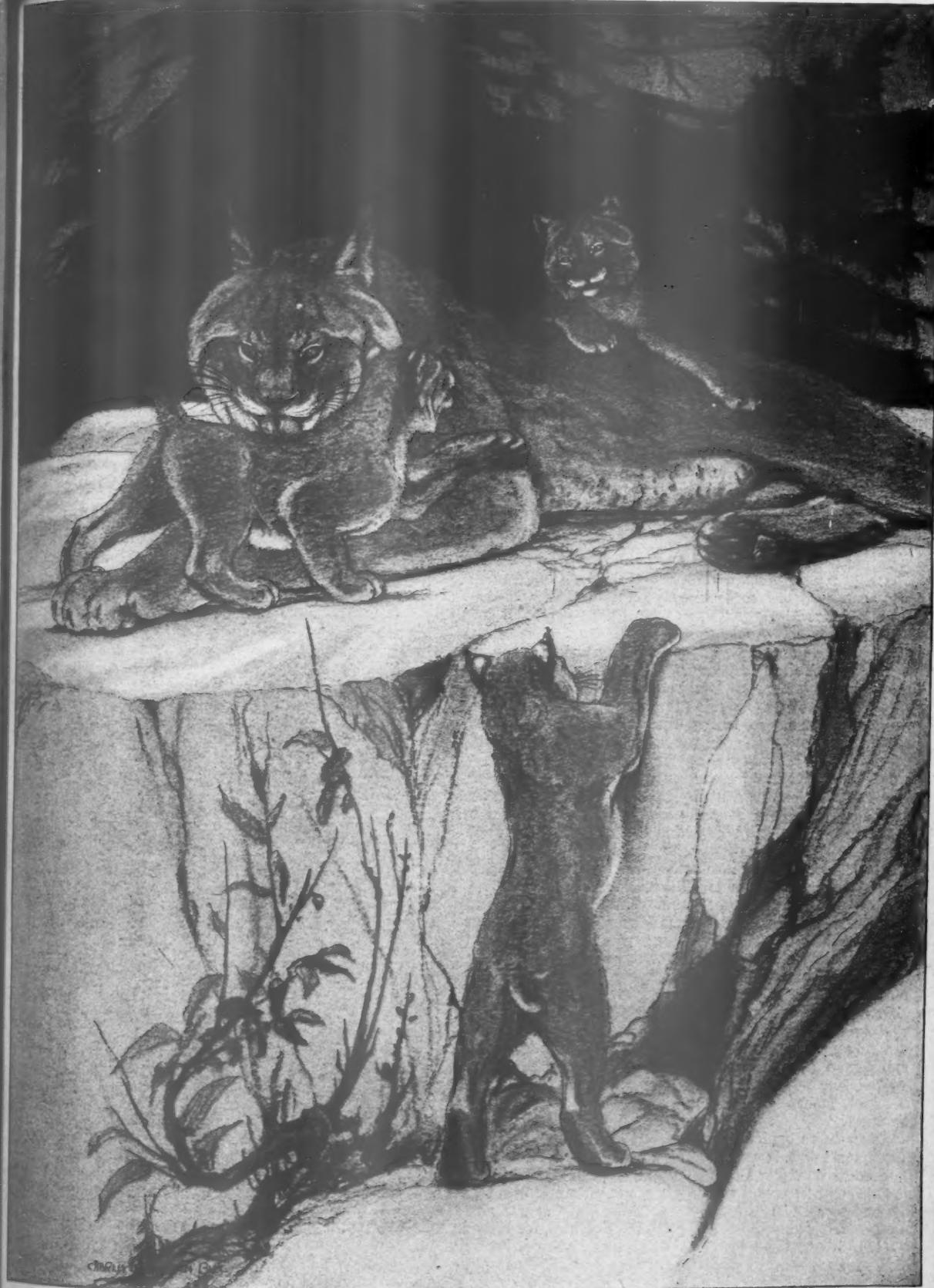
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The wild things had come fully into possession of their world for a space. The lynx played with her kittens without sniffing the air for the menace of man.

space flat as a table. In the center of this space was a clump of currant-bushes not more than a yard in girth, and black with fruit; and squatted on his haunches there, gathering the laden bushes in his arms, was a young black bear about four sizes larger than Neewa.

In that moment of consternation and rage Neewa did not take size into consideration. He was much in the frame of mind of a man returning home to discover his domicile, and all it contained, in the full possession of another. At the same time here was his ambition easily to be achieved—his ambition to lick the daylights out of a member of his own kind. Brimstone seemed to sense this fact. Under ordinary conditions he would have led in the affray and, before Neewa had fairly got started, would have been at the impudent interloper's throat. But now something held him back, and it was Neewa who first shot out—like a black bolt—landing squarely on the ribs of his unsuspecting enemy.

Old Makoki, the Cree runner, had he seen that attack, would instantly have found a name for the other bear—*Petoot-a-wapiskum*—which means literally “Kicked-off-His-Feet.” Perhaps he would have called him Pete for short. For the Cree believes in fitting names to fact, and *Petoot-a-wapiskum* certainly fitted the unknown bear like a glove. Taken utterly by surprise, with his mouth full of berries, he was bowled over like an overfilled bag under the force of Neewa's charge. So complete was his discomfiture for the moment that Brimstone, watching the affair with a yearning interest, could not keep back an excited yap of approbation. Before Pete could understand what had happened, and while the berries were still oozing from his mouth, Neewa was at his throat—and the fun began.

Now, bears, and especially young bears, have a way of fighting that is all their own. It reminds one of a hair-pulling contest between two well-matched females of our species. There are no rules to the game—utterly none. As Pete and Neewa clinched, their hind-legs began to do the fighting, and the fur began to fly. Pete, being already on his back—a first-class battling position for a bear—would have possessed an advantage had it not been for Neewa's ferocious hold at his throat. As it was, Neewa sank in his fangs to their full length, and scrubbed away for dear life with his sharp hind claws. Brimstone drew nearer at sight of the flying fur, his soul filled with joy. Then Pete got one leg into action, and then the other, and Brimstone's jaws came together with a sudden click.

Over and over the two fighters rolled, Neewa holding to his throat-grip, and not a squeal or a grunt came from either of them. Pebbles and dirt flew along with hair and fur. Stones rolled with a clatter down the coulée. The very air trembled with the thrill of combat. In Brimstone's attitude of tense waiting there was something now of suspicious anxiety. With eight furry legs scratching and tearing furiously, and the two fighters rolling and twisting and contorting themselves like a pair of windmills gone mad, it was almost impossible for Brimstone to tell who was getting the worst of it—Neewa or Pete. At least he was in doubt for a matter of three or four minutes.

Then he recognized Neewa's voice. It was very faint, but for all that, it was an unmistakable bawl of pain.

Smothered under Pete's heavier body, Neewa had begun to realize, at the end of those three or four minutes, that he had tackled more than was good for him. It was altogether Pete's size and not his fighting qualities, for Neewa had him outpointed there. But Neewa fought on, hoping for some good turn of luck, until at last Pete got him just where he wanted him and began raking him up and down his sides until in another three minutes he would have been half skinned if Brimstone hadn't judged the moment ripe for intervention.

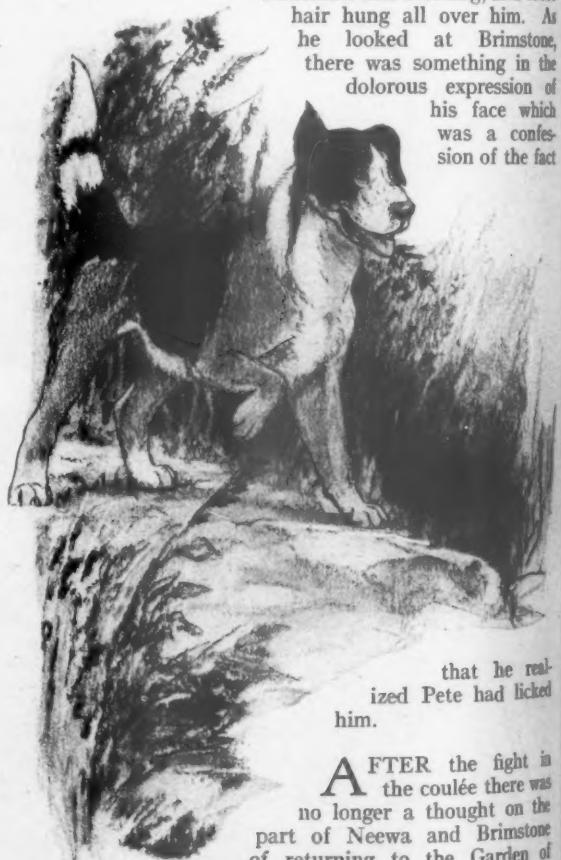
In another instant Brimstone had Pete by the ear. It

was a grim and terrible hold. Old Soominikit himself would have bawled lustily under the circumstances. Pete raised his voice in a howl of agony. He forgot everything else but the terror and the pain of this new *something* that had him by the ear, and he rent the air with his outcry. His lamentation poured in an unbroken spasm of sound from his throat—and Neewa knew that Brimstone was in action.

He pulled himself from under the young interloper's body—and not a second too soon. Down the coulée, charging like a mad bull, came Pete's mother. Neewa was off like a shot just as she made a powerful swing at him. The blow missed, and the old bear turned excitedly to her bawling offspring. Brimstone, hanging joyously to his victim, was oblivious of his danger until Pete's mother was almost upon him. He caught sight of her just as her long arm shot out like a wooden beam. He dodged—and the blow intended for him landed full against the side of the unfortunate Pete's head with a force that took him clean off his feet and sent him flying like a foot-ball twenty yards down the coulée.

Brimstone did not wait for other results. Quick as a flash, he was in a currant thicket tearing down the little gulch after Neewa. They came out on the plain together, and for a good ten minutes did not halt in their flight long enough to look back. When they did, the coulée was a mile away. They sat down, panting. Neewa's red tongue was hanging out in his exhaustion. He was

scratched and bleeding, and loose hair hung all over him. As he looked at Brimstone, there was something in the dolorous expression of his face which was a confession of the fact



that he realized Pete had licked him.

After the fight in the coulée there was no longer a thought on the part of Neewa and Brimstone of returning to the Garden of Eden in which the black currants grew so lusciously. In fact, Brimstone was undoubtedly glad they had been driven out. From the tip of his tail to the end of his nose he was an adventurer, and like the nomadic rovers of old, he was happiest when on the move. The wilderness had claimed him now, body and soul, and it is probable he would have shunned a

human camp at this stage of his life, even as Neewa would have shunned it. But in the lives of beasts as well as in the lives of men Fate plays her pranks and tricks, and even as they turned into the vast and mystery-filled spaces of the great lake and waterway country to the west, events were slowly shaping themselves into what was to be perhaps the darkest hour of gloom in the life of Brimstone, son of Hela.

Through six glorious and sun-filled weeks of late summer and early autumn—until the middle of September—Brimstone and Neewa ranged the country westward, always heading toward the setting sun. It was a marvelous world of river and lake, of mellow plain and sun-bathed ridges—the country of Jackson's Knee, of the Touchwood and the Clearwater, and God's Lake. In this country they saw many things. It was a region a hundred miles square which the handiwork of nature had made into a veritable kingdom of the wild. They came upon great beaver-colonies in the dark and silent places; they watched the otter at play; they came upon moose and caribou so frequently that they no longer feared or evaded them, but walked out openly into the meadows or down to the edge of the swamps where they were feeding. It was here that Brimstone learned the great lesson that claw and fang were made to prey upon horn and cloven hoof, for the wolves were thick, and the cub and the pup came a dozen times upon the wolves' kills, and even more frequently heard the wild tongue of the hunting-packs. Since his experience with Maheegun Brimstone no longer had the desire to join them. And now Neewa no longer insisted on remaining near meat when they found it.

It was the

With eight furry legs scratching and tearing, it was almost impossible for Brimstone to tell who was getting the worst of it—Neewa or Pete.

beginning of the *Kwaska-Hao* in Neewa—the instinctive sensing of the Big Change.

Until early in October, Brimstone could see but little of this change in his comrade. It was then that Neewa became more and more restless, and this restlessness grew as the chill nights came, and autumn breathed more heavily in the air. It was Neewa who took the lead in their peregrinations now, and he seemed always to be questing for something—a mysterious something which Brimstone could neither smell nor see. Neewa no longer slept for hours at a time. By mid-October he slept scarcely at all, but roved through most of the hours of night as well as day, eating, eating, eating, and always smelling the wind for that elusive thing which Nature was commanding him to seek and find. Ceaselessly the bear was nosing under windfalls and among the rocks, and Brimstone was always near him, always on the *qui vive* for battle with the thing that Neewa was hunting out. And it seemed never to be found.

Then Neewa turned back to the east, drawn by the instinct of his forefathers, back toward the country of Noozak, his mother, and of Soominikit, his father; and Brimstone followed. The nights grew more and more chill. The stars seemed farther away, and no longer was the forest moon red like blood. The cry of the loon had a moaning note in it, a note of grief and lamentation; and in their shacks and tepees the forest people sniffed the air of frosty mornings, and soaked their traps in fish-oil and beaver-grease, and made their moccasins, and mended snowshoe and sledge—for the cry of the loon said that winter was creeping down out of the North.

The swamps grew silent. The cow-moose no longer moored to her young. In place of it, from the open plain, stream and burn rose the defiant challenge of bull to bull and the deadly clash of horn against horn under the stars of night. The wolf no longer howled to hear his voice. In the travel of padded feet there came to be a slinking, hunting caution. In all the forest world blood was running red again.

And then—November.

PERHAPS Brimstone would never forget that first day when the snow came. At first he thought all the winged things in the world were shedding their white feathers. Then he felt the fine, soft touch of it under his feet, and the chill. It sent the blood rushing like a new kind of fire through his body—a wild and thrilling joy, the exultation that leaps through the veins of the wolf when the winter comes.

With Neewa its effect was different—so different that even Brimstone felt the oppression of it, and waited vaguely and anxiously for what was to come. And then, on this day of the first snow, he saw his comrade do a strange and unaccountable thing. Neewa began to eat

things that he had never touched as food before. He lapped up soft pine-needles and swallowed them. He ate of the dry, pulpy substance of rotted logs. And then he went into a great cleft broken into the heart of a rocky ridge—and found at last the thing for which he had been seeking. It was a cavern, deep and dark and warm.

Nature works in strange ways. She gives to the birds of the air eyes which men may never have, and she gives to the beasts of the earth an instinct which men may never experience. For Neewa had come back to sleep his first Long Sleep in the place of his birth—the cavern in which Noozak, his mother, had brought him into the



world. His old bed was still there, the wallow in the soft sand, the blanket of hair Noozak had shed; but the scent of his mother was gone.

In the nest where he was born Neewa lay down, and for the last time he grunted softly to Brimstone. It was as if he felt upon him the touch of a hand, gentle but inevitable, which he could no longer refuse to obey, and to Brimstone was saying for a last time—"Good night!"

THAT night the *Pipoo Kestin*—the first storm of winter—came like an avalanche from out of the North. With it came a wind that was like the roaring of a thousand bulls, and over all the land of the wild there was nothing that moved. Even in the depth of the cavern Brimstone heard the beat and the wail of it and the swishing of the shotlike snow beyond the door through which they had come, and he snuggled close to Neewa.

With day he went to the slit in the face of the rock, and in his astonishment he made no sound, but stared forth upon a world that was no longer the world he had left last night. Everywhere it was white, a dazzling, eye-blinding white. The sun had risen. It shot a thousand flashing shafts of radiant light into Brimstone's eyes. As far as his vision reached the earth was as if covered with a robe of diamonds. From rock and tree and shrub blazed the fire of the sun; it quivered in the tree-tops, bent low with their burden of snow; it was like a sea in the valley, so vivid that the unfrozen stream running through the heart of it was black. Never had Brimstone seen a day so magnificent.

He whined, and ran back to Neewa. He barked in the gloom of the cavern and gave his comrade a nudge with his nose. Neewa grunted sleepily. He stretched himself, raised his head for an instant and then curled himself into a ball again. Vainly Brimstone protested. Neewa made no response, and after a little Brimstone returned to the mouth of the cavern and went out into the snow.

For an hour he did not move farther than ten feet away from the den. Three times he returned to Neewa and urged him to get up and come out into the light. But he failed. Neewa was in the edge of his Long Sleep—the beginning of *Uske Pow-a-Mew*, the dreamland of the bears.

Annoyance, almost the desire to sink his teeth in Neewa's ear, gave place slowly to another thing in Brimstone. The instinct that between beasts is like the spoken reason of men stirred in a strange and disquieting way within him. He became more and more uneasy. There was almost distress in his restlessness as he hovered about the mouth of the cavern. A last time he went to Neewa, and then he started alone down into the valley.

He was hungry, but on this first day after the storm there was small chance of his finding anything to eat. The snowshoe rabbits were completely buried under their windfalls and shelters, and lay quietly in their warm nests. Nothing had moved during the hours of the storm. There were no trails of living things for him to follow, and in places he sank to his shoulders in the soft snow. He made his way to the creek. It was no longer the creek he had known. It was edged with ice. There was something dark and brooding about it now. The sound it made was no longer the rippling song of summer and golden autumn. There was a threat in its gurgling monotone, a new voice, as if a black, forbidding spirit had taken possession of it.

He drank of the water cautiously. It was cold—ice-cold. Slowly it impinged upon him that in the beauty of this new world that was his there was no longer the warm and pulsing beat of the heart that was life. He was alone—alone! Everything else was covered up; everything else seemed dead.

He went back to Neewa and lay close to him all through the day. And through the night that followed he did not move again from the cavern. He went only as far as the door and saw celestial spaces ablaze with stars and a moon

that rode up into the heavens like a white sun. They seemed no longer like the moon and stars he had known.

With the coming of dawn Brimstone once more tried to awaken Neewa. But this time he was not so insistent. Neither did he have the desire to nip Neewa with his teeth. Something had happened which he could not understand. He sensed the thing, but he could not reason it.

He went down again to hunt. Under the glory of the moon and stars it had been a wild night of carnival for the rabbits, and in the edge of the timber Brimstone found the snow beaten hard in places with their tracks. It was not difficult for him to stalk his breakfast this morning. He made his kill and feasted. He killed again after that, and still again. He could have gone on killing, for now that the snow betrayed them, the hiding-places of the rabbits were so many traps for them. Brimstone's courage returned. He was fired again with the joy of life. Never had he known such hunting. He ate till he could eat no more, and then he went back to Neewa, carrying one of the rabbits. He dropped it in front of his comrade, and whined. Even then Neewa did not respond.

That afternoon, for the first time in many hours, Neewa rose to his feet; he stretched himself, and sniffed of the dead rabbit, but he did not eat. To Brimstone's consternation he rolled round in his nest and went to sleep again.

The next day, at about the same time, Neewa roused himself once more. This time he went as far as the mouth of the den, and lapped up a few mouthfuls of snow. But he still refused to eat the rabbit. Again it was Nature telling him that he must not disturb the pine needles and dry bark with which he had padded his stomach and intestines. And he went to sleep again.

He did not get up after that. Day followed day, and growing lonelier as the winter deepened, Brimstone hunted alone. All through November he came back each night and slept with Neewa. And Neewa was as if dead, except that his body was warm, and he breathed, and made little sounds now and then in his throat. But this did not satisfy the great yearning that was becoming more and more insistent in Brimstone's soul, the overwhelming desire for company, for a brotherhood on the trail. He loved Neewa. Through the first long weeks of winter he returned to him faithfully; he brought him meat; he was filled with a strange grief—even greater than if Neewa had been dead. For Brimstone knew that he was alive, and he could not account for the thing that had happened.

So it came that one night, having hunted far, Brimstone remained away from the den for the first time, and slept under a deep windfall. After that it was still harder for him to resist the call. A second and a third night he went away; and then came the time, inevitable as the coming and going of the moon and stars, when understanding at last broke its way through his hope and his fear, and something told him that Neewa would never again travel with him as through those glorious days of old, when shoulder to shoulder they had faced together the comedies and tragedies of life in a world that was no longer soft and green and warm with a golden sun, but white and still and filled with death. Neewa did not know when he went away from the den for the last time. And yet it may be that even in his slumber the Beneficent Spirit may have whispered that Brimstone was going, for there was restlessness in Neewa's dreamland for many days thereafter.

"Be quiet—and sleep!" the Spirit may have whispered. "The winter is long. The rivers are black and chill; the lakes are covered with floors of ice; and the waterfalls are frozen like great white giants. Sleep! For Brimstone must go his way, as the waters of the streams must go their way to the sea. For he is dog, and you are bear. Sleep!"

THE story of Brimstone's adventures alone will be in Mr. Curwood's next story, in the October issue, on sale September twenty-third.

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There was no longer the scent of man in all the wilderness. The moose went openly into the cool water of the lakes.

THIS absorbing novel by the gifted author of "Crowns of Tin" tells the strange story of Marquita Shay, a girl who knew nothing about men, because she had never known any women.

For it so happened that Marquita's Spanish mother died while the Shays were on a visit to Canada when Marquita was a tiny girl. And when heartbroken Joe Shay followed his wife shortly afterward, he intrusted Marquita to the guardianship of his bachelor ranchman friend John Gratiot.

"Take good care of her, John," said Shay to Gratiot. "If she is anything like her father, she will need it." And realizing what an inheritance of the wander-spirit and of impracticality would be Marquita's, Shay made a will stipulating that if Marquita married before she became of age, or without her guardian's consent, his money should go to the church instead of to her.

Marquita grew to young womanhood on John Gratiot's Canadian wheat farm; and—save for a few months' companionship with a woman who served as housekeeper and who soon fled from the loneliness of the wheat farm—Marquita had for associates only John Gratiot and the many men who came and went as helpers in the wheat-fields. One of these, indeed, an Englishman of education named Barrington, stayed some four years as a tutor; of him Marquita was very fond, and from him she obtained an education of a sort. But for the rest she grew up wild, occasionally taking part in a poker-game with eccentric, careless John Gratiot and the other men, and accepting a cocktail with the others quite as a matter of course.

Marquita was seventeen—a beautiful if exotic and flamboyant seventeen—when John Gratiot decided to fulfill his long-cherished plan of selling the ranch and going back to civilization—to St. Louis, to be precise, where he had once lived. And soon a purchaser came to inspect the ranch,—Charles Wells, a narrow and hypocritical St. Louis business man,—and with him came his son Humphrey, an attractive youth of twenty-four.

Marquita's meeting with Humphrey Wells occurred the day before the father's arrival, when Marquita, out driving her little car, came upon Humphrey trying to repair his own broken automobile. She offered to take him to town with her; and there the two young people lunched and danced together. Next evening, when Humphrey and his father came formally to dinner at the ranch, the young man was astonished to find in his hostess the young girl who had the day before so entranced him with her dark foreign beauty—and so shocked him by saying: "I know quite a nice restaurant. They have wonderful cocktails there."

The deal for the sale of the ranch was made, and John Gratiot and Marquita presently arrived in St. Louis—Gratiot eager to go into business there, and Marquita looking forward to city life and to another meeting with Humphrey Wells. But Gratiot had belatedly decided that Marquita must have some regular schooling and announced that she was to attend an old-fashioned finishing-school—Miss Pringle's.

"I don't want any school, and you know it, John," she protested. John was the name by which she had always called him.

Gratiot had never in his life before refused Marquita anything; but this time he insisted and Marquita gave in.

She went to the school as a day-scholar and found it almost insufferable, for Miss Pringle insisted that Marquita tone down her too-brilliant costumes; and the conventional studies and her too, too ladylike fellow-students bored her. In the afternoon, however, she slipped away to dancing places with Humphrey Wells. And once she met, in the mother of another student, a divorcee named Mrs. Chisholm, whose stories of gay life in New York quite fascinated her.

During this time Marquita saw but little of her guardian, for he was launched on a career of business intrigue

with the elder Wells. And Wells also grew so preoccupied in their schemes that he left his routine business more and more to Humphrey and finally sent the young man to New York to handle matters that would require an absence of some months.

Marquita and Humphrey were both much distressed at the thought of separation; and Humphrey, deeply in love, proposed an immediate clandestine marriage.

"Look here, Marquita," he said. "I don't know how you feel about me, but I can't bear to leave you, not to see you for three months. Anything might happen in that time. You

might meet some one else. I—you know I love you Marquita—"

He paused, embarrassed out of speech, but Marquita could not help him. She was listening wide-eyed.

"You're not happy in school. Here's my plan. Why can't you come East with me? We'll go across the river to Belleville, be married, come back here for dinner and take the late train for New York. Father and Mr. Gratiot are good friends. I don't believe they'll make any trouble after it's over. Will you do it?"

HE had taken her hands across the table at which they were seated. His gray eyes held hers and lighted an answering fire. The adventure thrilled her—to be free, to be through with school, to live in New York and be gay and charming like Mrs. Chisholm!

Simultaneously with these thoughts came others. She thought, indeed, of what John had said about forfeiting her inheritance if she married before she was of age or without his consent. If she accepted Humphrey's plan, she would be doing both. But she did not stop to think what it might mean to her to be financially dependent on some one else, because she had never considered money; its importance had never been emphasized in her personal experience. Nor did she stop to consider what this might mean to Humphrey. She thought only of the opportunity he offered—not of his love, but of freedom and the city which Mrs. Chisholm had made her curious to see. If she hesitated a second, he might change his mind.

"When?" She whispered the one word and held her breath for his answer.

"You darling—you darling! I can't kiss you here. Let's leave at once. I can kiss you in the car, and we can make our plans."

And thus it came about that Marquita and Humphrey slipped across the river one evening and were married, and that night took the train for the East.

"My wife!" Humphrey whispered, kissing her passionately as they rode back across the bridge; but it somehow seemed to Marquita that the cold mist from the river had settled round her heart.

The second installment of a novel of young womanhood which could have been written only by a young woman

It was a curious message to come from a man who was dead.

The C A L L o f L I F E

By JEANNE
JUDSON

Whose first novel, "Crowns of Tin," made so distinct an impression earlier in the year.

CHAPTER III

MARQUITA and Humphrey had been in New York one week—one week in which so many conflicting emotions had left their impress on Marquita's mind and soul that it would be years before she would even attempt to classify them or to find the relation of one thing to another. The step across the threshold from girlhood into marriage, which she had taken without either the mental or physical preparation through which most women pass, had in itself been too sudden, almost too violent a change for her to understand. The misgiving that had come to her when Humphrey kissed her after the ceremony was deepened, now that she realized that marriage meant not only the novelty of Humphrey's society, but an intimacy so close that only love much greater than she had ever known could make it entirely justifiable in her eyes.

Marquita was fond of Humphrey—he appealed to her in all the ways that youth appeals to youth. If she had married him, loving some other man, there would have been a revulsion of feeling that would have swept away her affection and changed it to loathing directed both against herself and against him. But so far, her feeling for her husband was the nearest approach to love that she had ever known. She was not even sure that she was capable of anything deeper. Only in brief moments when she was alone and had time to analyze, did she admit to herself that she and Humphrey, living together in the closest of all human relationships, were in all that makes for actual oneness a million miles apart. Vaguely she understood that real love would have brought them a closer sympathy and a clearer understanding of each other.

This mental unrest might have culminated in another departure as impulsive as her marriage, had not everything been overshadowed in Marquita's mind by the adventure of being in New York. In many ways Marquita was still a child, and to the child part of her nature New York seemed far more important than marriage. All the myriad new sights and sounds and sensations of it! She registered a million pictures, piled one on top of the other in a chaos of reception beyond all classification.

The person who has lived long in cities sees very little; he has learned to observe only the things that it is necessary for him to observe, or that particularly please or interest him; but Marquita saw everything. She saw in

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Illustrated by
GRANT T. REYNARD

detail every person she passed; she registered every shopwindow, every building, every little comedy or tragedy of the street. Her curiosity was insatiable. Where were all these people going? Where had they come from? She could not understand how so many people could pass each other by without meaning anything in each other's lives —without having some point of contact.

She and Humphrey were stopping at a hotel above Forty-second Street and below Columbus Circle, where it seemed to Marquita, looking down from her twentieth-story window, that the life of the entire world whirled and eddied round them. Humphrey had suggested that they move to a quieter place farther uptown, but Marquita wanted to stay. She liked every bit of it—the noise was music to her ears. The sound of a fire-engine or an ambulance bell, the calling of an extra, separating themselves from the hum of other sounds, would call her to a window to see what it was all about. She was constantly amazed at the paradox of New York's colossal indifference to important things and keen interest in trivial ones. She once pushed through a big crowd around a window only to discover that they were watching a "demonstration" of face-cream.

She felt that, living at the Grandon and riding in a taxicab to some theater, she was only seeing the surface of things, and she wanted to dig down underneath and find what was there. She insisted that Humphrey take her riding on the subway, which he finally did, not in one of the rush hours, but in the middle of the day when she could sit down. Marquita, not being an habitual subway traveler, did not appreciate this advantage. Instead she walked to the rear car and stood looking out into the dark, rapidly receding tunnel, her face fanned by the moist, stale air—and liked it. It made her think of the mythology stories that Cecil Barrington had told her as a child. This was the realm of Pluto, and she was riding in his chariot.

All these were things which Humphrey could not share with her. He called her a "funny child" and laughed at her fancies. He had assumed an older-person attitude with

her since their marriage, though as Marquita often thought, she would soon be eighteen and Humphrey was only twenty-four.

Marquita had never seen the ocean. She wanted to go to the Battery and the Statue of Liberty and a hundred other things for which Humphrey assured her there was no time this trip. Some day they would come back when he would have no business to interfere with their pleasure. Marquita did not feel really aggrieved at her failure to do any of the things she suggested. There was so much that she could do—so much to see.

On the day of their arrival they had sent two telegrams telling of their marriage—one to John Gratiot and one to Humphrey's father. She had thought that they would both wire back, but they had not done so. She would not have cared greatly except that she could see that Humphrey was concerned about their silence. Finally after three days Humphrey did receive a letter from his father—a letter that had made his good-natured mouth grow tight and stubborn.

"What does he say?" Marquita asked.

"He is all right—doesn't mind. Thinks we are too young and all that sort of thing, but no serious objection. Mother will write to you in a day or two. You know Mother is almost an invalid. She never goes out, and we have a nurse in the house most of the time. She would have written at once if she had been able to write. You'll love Mother."

"Of course, but I want to see just what your father said; mayn't I?"

The letter had come in the evening mail, and they were preparing to go to dinner. Humphrey was busy arranging his cravat. He answered:

"There's no real reason why you shouldn't see the letter—only I don't want you to misjudge my father. He says things he doesn't mean; his heart is all right, but his way of expressing himself is sometimes—well, awkward."

"If you don't let me see it," said Marquita, "I'll think it's worse than it is, and that you're just trying to spare my feelings." She stretched out one slender hand as she spoke, and Humphrey gave it to her reluctantly. She read:

"My Dear Humphrey:

"I need not tell you that your mother and I are both grieved that you should take such an important step without consulting us, but of course you are of age, and we will not withhold our blessing. We could have wished that you would at least choose a Christian, and by her own confession, Miss Shay—your wife—is an unbeliever. However, it is too late to think of those things now.

"At your present salary you are in no position to support a wife, and I have no intention of advancing you beyond your earning capacity. Mr. Gratiot will doubtless continue his ward's allowance, and she will, I understand, come into some small fortune when she is of age.

"Another reason for regret is that I have found it necessary to sever my business relations with Mr. Gratiot. He is not a practical business man, and we could not work together in harmony.

"Assure your wife that your mother and I will both welcome her as a daughter so long as her conduct is deserving of our consideration.

"Your mother sends love and will write as soon as she is strong enough. Your telegram was a great shock to her. I trust you will not neglect the business on which I sent you to New York.—Your affectionate father,

"Charles Wells."

MARQUITA read the entire letter through in silence and laid it on the table without comment. Humphrey, who had expected a storm of words, turned to look at her. She was sitting in a big chair, one foot tucked under her in a childish attitude that would have been

awkward in anyone else. Her head was bent as if to conceal tears. A quick passion of protectiveness flooded Humphrey's heart, and he swept her into his arms.

"Please don't take it seriously, Marquita. He doesn't mean half he says. I know it's wrong to criticize my own father, but—he's never learned to say things gracefully. You won't let it worry you, dear—please."

Between broken phrases and passionate kisses he had looked into her eyes—clear topaz wells in which he could see no trace of tears. Very gently he put her down in the big chair. He had not wanted her to be hurt, and yet he was disappointed that she showed no emotion. His heart had been torn with love and pity for her and with resentment against his father for making her suffer—and apparently she was not suffering at all! She was so different from all his preconceived ideas about women. She did not weep when he thought a woman should weep, and he could never tell what she was thinking about.

It is annoying to have a wife whose thoughts one cannot share or even guess.

"Why is it wrong to criticize your father?" she asked. "Because—because he's my father."

Marquita laughed. Her high, clear laughter had been one of her greatest charms for Humphrey, but this time her laughter jarred, because under the circumstances it seemed meaningless. He saw no cause for mirth, and he disliked the unexpected. He had expected tears, and Marquita laughed.

"If one's father is a stupid, mercenary old hypocrite, I see no reason why one shouldn't say so," she said.

He looked at her sternly, reproachfully, yet tenderly.

"Remember, he is my father. You must not judge him hastily, and you must make an effort to like him."

She suppressed another impulse to laugh. She could see the hurt in Humphrey's face.

"I'll try and be kind to the poor old thing," she said, leaving her seat and gliding into the circle of Humphrey's arms, arms always ready to open for her regardless of the manner in which she came to them.

"Let's forget all about stupid fathers and guardians and just enjoy our honeymoon," she said, lifting her face for a kiss. As yet, Marquita knew very little about love, but she had learned the power of loveliness.

IT had been three days since the letter had come from Mr. Wells, and as yet they had heard nothing from John Gratiot. Humphrey Wells did not guess the mingled hope and fear with which Marquita watched for a letter. He was as blind to this as he had been to the tumult which his father's letter had raised in her heart. Whenever she was alone, she would reread over and over again:

"Mr. Gratiot will doubtless continue his ward's allowance, and she will, I understand, come into some small fortune when she is of age, which should be soon."

She wished now that she had told Humphrey about her father's will before they eloped. She remembered how the thought had come to her and how she had dismissed it from her mind as of no importance to herself or Humphrey. But it was vitally important, and now it would do no good to tell. Apparently Charley Wells considered his son in the light of a dependent, and she would also be a dependent. The thought was intolerable.

She had forfeited her inheritance, and she had no further claim on John Gratiot. Nor could she expect anything from his generosity—he must be angry or he would have written or wired. The school episode had taught her that he could be firm, and Marquita was frightened. On that journey into Illinois she had crossed a wider river than she knew, and there was no way of turning back. If Humphrey's family regarded her so unfavorably now, what would be their attitude when they discovered that she had no money? She had begun to realize the importance of money in the horizon of people like Mr. Wells—in the

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play answered: "There's no real reason why you shouldn't see the letter—only I don't want you to misjudge my father." "If you don't let me see it," said Marquita, "I'll think it's worse than it is."



To Marquita, Mrs. Wells looked very old. Even the smile with which she greeted their entrance did not brighten her eyes.

horizon of most of the people she had met; for it was she, not Mr. Wells, who was singular in her attitude toward money.

Knowing this, there was one thing that troubled her more than all the rest—what would Humphrey say? That he loved her she had no doubt—his unfailing kindness, his undisguised admiration, his lavish endearments all proved that. But he loved money too; he talked of it, of men who had it, of how he would make it, of how some one else lost it through bad investments or bad business judgment. She thought of money as a great, glittering idol before which the whole world knelt in fear, and somehow this idol was confused in her mind with Mr. Wells' Christianity. Humphrey had never called himself a Christian, but he had been reared in fear and reverence of the gold idol, and she could not guess what his attitude would be when he found that she had carelessly thrown away the gift of his god. Even if he did not mind the lost inheritance, he would not understand why she had not told him about it before their marriage. Perhaps he would not have married her if he had known. She tried to keep this thought out, but it kept coming back. She knew that eventually he must find out, but her old habit of silence, of waiting for circumstances to explain themselves, held her silent.

Marquita knew nothing of the exchange of thoughts, ambitions, impulses, ideals—the sharing of inner life—that finds its beginning for most people in the family circle. There had been from ten to thirty men on the ranch each summer, but except for the few years with Cecil Barrington, who had been her teacher, she had lived alone. She was too busy with tangible things to have much time for thought, but since the letter from Humphrey's father, she had been waiting for some word from John, alternately telling herself that he must write, and resigning herself to the fact that he would not.

At last a letter did come. There was the flourishing, black penmanship of John Gratot before her eyes, but the letter was addressed to "Humphrey Wells, Esq." not to herself, and her heart sank.

"We've heard from John at last," she said, assuming her most careless tone.

"What does he say?"

"I don't know. The letter is addressed to you." She gave it to him unopened as she spoke.

There was no need to ask what was the general tone of the letter, for Humphrey's face was a mirror in which his every thought and emotion were vividly reflected. She saw surprise, anger and indignation there as she read. He looked

holding the letter in both hands as if he were about to break it into bits. The catching sight of her face, he gained control of himself and smiled at her.

"We certainly are the little stepchildren, Marquita; nobody loves us at all, but so long as we love each other—" He took her in his arms and kissed her. It was his new changing finish to every conversation, and Marquita was beginning to be a bit weary of kisses. Whatever limitations her life with John Gratot had held, he had at least always talked to her as to an equal. She was beginning to suspect that Humphrey regarded her as an intellectual inferior—a sort of beautiful pet.

"Let me see the letter," she said, releasing herself from his embrace.

"I'd rather you didn't. It will only make you unhappy. He seems to imagine that I married you because I thought you were an heiress, and explained about your father's will. I do think, Marquita, that you should have told me that. Of course, dear, it's wonderful to know that you loved me enough to make such a big sacrifice for me—but if you'd told me, I might not have been willing to let you make it. We could have waited, you know."

There was so much love and admiration in his eyes, so much happy pride in his voice, that Marquita stilled her wakening conscience and suppressed her impulse to tell him that she had made no sacrifice, that she had not thought about her inheritance. The thought came to her that perhaps she had cheated Humphrey Wells.

"I'm awfully glad you don't care about the money, she said.

"Of course not; you didn't—surely you couldn't think that I would care—at least not for myself. I'm thinking of you. It means that for a short time you may not have everything that your guardian would have given you. We may have to live very simply when we get back to St. Louis. You know what Dad wrote about not increasing my salary—but that won't last long. I'm going to work and work, so that you'll never have reason to regret your sacrifice. I can't tell you how much I love you for having made it—and then not even saying a word to me about it!"

"Please let me see John's letter; he's my guardian, you know, even if he did address his letter to you. She pouted prettily, trying by the lightness of her tone

turn Humphrey from his serious mood. It troubled her to have him talk thus of a sacrifice which she had not made.

"I can't, Marquita. All he says is that you are a little fool and that I am a big fool, and a knave as well; then he says some shocking things about my esteemed parent that are not fit for a lady's eyes or ears. Guess the old man must have trimmed him in a business deal." He laughed as he thought of his father's cunning. "Dad's a good Christian," he continued, "but it certainly is hard to beat him when it comes to money."

"Are you going to let me see John's letter?" She was serious this time, but Humphrey did not notice the change.

"Not for the world; it would only make you feel badly." He tore the letter across again and again and dropped the pieces to the floor.

Marquita was angry as she had never been angry before. She felt an impulse to scratch and tear at the smiling, conventional face before her, but she did not move or speak. She knew that if she could have read John Gratiot's letter, she would have understood exactly the mood in which it was written, that she would have found in it a weak spot — some phrase on which she could have based a letter to him that would open the way for a reconciliation. In tearing up the letter Humphrey had broken the last link that bound her to her old life, and had condemned her to a future under Charley Wells' domination and control. For the moment she hated him. Only pride kept her from picking up the torn fragments and piecing them together.

"Come — let's forget all about it," said Humphrey, "this is our honeymoon, not a funeral." And when her careless laughter answered him, he never guessed that Marquita had in that moment definitely decided that she did not and never would love her husband.

Humphrey Wells had often been in New York with his father, but this was the first time he had

How to get to New York without taking money from Humphrey was her biggest problem. It was then that she thought of her jewelry.

ever been there as his own master. Added to the unaccustomed pleasure of being free to come and go as he pleased was the joy of introducing Marquita to the New York that he knew. It was the New York of the provincial visitor, Broadway with its garish lights, the restaurants and theaters—the shopping-district on Fifth Avenue, the New York of 1915, whose streets seemed swollen arteries flowing with dollars, whose hotels were filled with overnight millionaires and near millionaires who whispered of "Government contracts." Every hour Humphrey could steal from the business on which his father had sent him was spent in showing to Marquita these things, the inner meaning of which he understood as little as did she.

The days were filled with mingled ecstasy and agony for Humphrey. Wherever they went, men turned to stare at her—not merely a certain class of men who stare at all women, but all men, each after the manner of his kind. He saw the dull eyes of staid old gentlemen glow with the fire of youth as she passed, the leer of Broadway satyrs, the shy, admiring glances of well-bred boys, and the bold appraisal of blasé youth; and under every look he saw the same half-checked eagerness and involuntary reaching out toward her, as if every man desired to hold her in his arms. Sometimes when he was away from her he had difficulty in restraining himself from abruptly leaving whomever he was with, to rush back to their hotel and assure himself that she was safe. Suppose some man should speak to her—touch her! The thought was unbearable.

All this was not due entirely to Humphrey's jealous imagination. Marquita too saw and felt the eyes of men upon her, and in every eye there was an invitation, an appeal, an imperious demand that lifted up her heart and brought new brightness to her eyes and added an unconscious coquetry

to every movement of her body. Her response was as instinctive and involuntary as the admiration she inspired. Marquita was intelligent, impulsive, generous, clever and kind, but it would be long before any man discovered these qualities. Marquita was too beautiful. She could never hope to be the friendly companion of men, though she could have as many lovers as she pleased. She would never watch friendship develop into love, but if she were very fortunate, she might see love turn into friendship.

Through finding out the attitude of other people toward her, Marquita was beginning to get a clearer vision of herself. She and Hum-





The next few days Marquita spent in the shops. Incidentally she spent all of her last allowance from John Gratiot and wondered whether she would ever have any more. She never once thought of asking Humphrey for money.

phey could not always be alone, and she met many of Humphrey's business acquaintances. One evening Humphrey told her that they were to dine with a Mr. Linihan.

"He wanted me to have dinner with him to finish up some details that we were talking over this afternoon, and I told him about you, so he suggested that we all dine together. He is going to telephone Mrs. Linihan and have her join us here. You don't mind, do you?"

MARQUITA did not mind. She liked to meet people and was especially pleased at the prospect of meeting another woman. She set about the task of dressing herself with elaborate care. There was still very little to be said in favor of Marquita's mode of dressing except that she would have looked pretty in anything; and buying, as she did, at the best shops, she could not fail to be fashionably dressed.

Mr. and Mrs. Linihan arrived at the appointed time, and with them was a tall, pale young man who was introduced as Mr. Killean, a cousin of Mrs. Linihan.

"Knowing that I couldn't get home, Mrs. Linihan was going to dine with her cousin," explained Mr. Linihan; "so I asked them both to come on and join us."

Mr. Linihan was a large, quiet man of middle age, with a curious untrained mustache that seemed to run riot over the lower part of his face, completely obliterating his mouth and drooping down onto his chin, which thrust a dimple out at the world as if to say that Mr. Linihan was not at all as fierce and untamed as the mustache would have the world believe. Marquita was not greatly impressed with him. His wife was of the figure generally described as *petite*—small and rather rounded, with what was, for the fashion, a well-defined waist-line. Her hair was almost as dark as Marquita's own; her eyes were round, very dark brown—and stupid-looking, Marquita thought. Her lower lip was round and full and very red, and it drooped slightly as if of its own weight, so that it did not quite meet the upper one, which was very thin and straight, over sharp white teeth. Marquita saw all these details, and that the ensemble was rather pretty than otherwise; not being a physiognomist, she was prepared to like Mr. Linihan.

Mr. Linihan had come directly from his office, and Humphrey had asked Marquita not to wear evening dress. Mrs. Linihan and her cousin were, however, in full evening costume, which gave the party a somewhat impromptu appearance.

"I suppose you people intended to go to the Ritz," said Mr. Linihan, addressing his wife. "But I'm not dressed, and so I'm afraid you'll have to make concessions to the tired business men." He smiled at Humphrey as if looking for support.

"Mr. Linihan likes to go to these cheap cabaret places," asserted Mrs. Linihan. "I suppose it's because he's Irish."

"I'm Irish too, and I like them," said Marquita, coming to the rescue of the husband, who was obviously ashamed of what his wife considered his low tastes.

"Inasmuch as we're sort of half and half as regards clothes," said Mr. Killean, "I guess the cabaret wins. Besides, the only real difference between Broadway and the Ritz is that at the Ritz everyone imagines that everyone else is somebody." He spoke in a slow voice with a sort of nasal tone that was at once disagreeable and attractive. It was plain from the way in which Mrs. Linihan listened to him that her superiority to her husband did not extend to Mr. Killean.

"Let's go in for an evening of real Bohemia!" she exclaimed with enthusiasm. "It's really good for one now and then."

They were making their way toward Mr. Linihan's car—a car like its owner, strongly built and roughly used. Mr. Killean stepped close to Marquita.

"Whatever you do in New York," he said in a low tone, "don't run around looking for Bohemia. Mrs. Linihan thinks it's on Broadway, and there they think it's in Washington Square, and in Washington Square the inhabitants long to go hunting for it in Paris; but the truth of the matter is that there isn't any such place."

Marquita knew she was going to like Mr. Killean, but with the quick intuitions of women about other women she sensed that this would not be at all to the liking of Mrs. Linihan; so on the way to their restaurant she made a conscious effort to talk to Humphrey and Mr. Linihan and leave Mr. Killean to the low whispers of Mrs. Linihan. Conversation developed that the relationship between the two was so distant as to be negligible. They called him cousin because he was "such an old friend of the family."

THE restaurant to which they went was neither better nor worse than dozens of others to which Marquita and Humphrey had gone. It was a bit farther uptown, a bit noisier and a bit more crowded than some of the others. Humphrey and Mr. Linihan talked business. Mr. Killean tried to talk to Marquita; Mrs. Linihan tried to talk to Mr. Killean; and Marquita tried to talk to Mrs. Linihan. It was not very successful. Finally Paul Killean asked Mrs. Linihan to dance.

"In this mob—oh, Paul, you know I couldn't. You know how fastidious I am about those things; it's all very well to watch, but to permit them to walk all over one—" She finished with a shrug.

"You, then." He turned to Marquita, but before she could reply, Mrs. Linihan interrupted:

"What a well-dressed woman, for this place!"

They all turned to look at the girl who was passing.

"Don't you hate a lot of impossible colors and wild jewelry?" continued Mrs. Linihan, looking innocently at Marquita. Marquita knew that she had on a rose-colored hat that threw a delightful color on her cheeks—also that her suit was a not-too-dark blue velvet, and that her shoes were white and she was wearing a rather conspicuous amount of jewelry. She had known from observation for more than a week that her clothes were wrong, but she had been too busy to analyze or to shop very much. She knew that Mrs. Linihan's words were meant as a criticism of herself. She would not have minded so much if she had not known that everyone else at the table, with the possible exception of Mr. Linihan, understood the allusion. Marquita was determined that she would not show any embarrassment; she was also determined that never again would a woman like Mrs. Linihan ridicule the way she dressed.

"You were asking me to dance?" she said to Paul Killean. In another moment they had left the table, leaving the jealous face of Humphrey, the fierce, apologetic countenance of Mr. Linihan and the dull brown eyes of Mrs. Linihan in a silent circle.

Marquita was humiliated and hurt and angry. Paul Killean never guessed that the attention which she was apparently centering on him was in reality entirely taken up with the costumes of the women about her. She saw everything in detail. She had always been able to tell well-dressed women from badly dressed ones, but she had never applied that knowledge to herself. She always bought one thing at a time, because color or texture appealed to her at the moment, without ever thinking of how these things would go together.

Now she began to look at well-dressed women to see why they were well-dressed. At the same time she watched her partner. She had his undivided attention, and the expression in his eyes soothed her wounded feelings. She would not make any further effort to keep him from talking to her. She would show the other woman that she could wear what she wished and still be more attractive than most people. As for Humphrey—if he was ashamed

of the way she dressed, let him see what other men thought of her.

Paul Killean seemed eager to fall in with her plans, and they danced together repeatedly, while Humphrey grew sulky and silent, and Mrs. Linihan pretended to be very much amused at their enthusiasm, and Mr. Linihan struggled to break through the strained atmosphere and find out what it was all about. Once Marquita, feeling sorry for the poor man, who was in no way responsible for the uncongenial atmosphere of his party, asked him to dance with her.

"These new dances—I'm afraid; Harriet says I'm too awkward."

"I'm sure that can't be so—come on and try!" And she walked off with him, timid and pleased beyond words at having a young woman invite him to dance with her.

"Mrs. Linihan will not dare dance with Paul Killean while we're gone, because having once refused, she'll be too proud to change her mind, and she wants to prove that she is more fastidious than I am," thought Marquita, but even this thought did not make her happy. She knew that Humphrey was miserable—he had not danced with her at all, and that too, was pride. Proud persons were silly. Marquita's thought continued, and then she admitted to herself that she had been guilty of wounded vanity and of trying to make Humphrey pay for something that was entirely Mrs. Linihan's fault.

She waited for Humphrey to say something to her about the evening as soon as they were alone, but he had evidently been thinking also—only in some things Humphrey did not have as much self-control as Marquita. He could not keep silent long. When he spoke, it was not about what really troubled him.

"Why didn't you ask Mrs. Linihan to come and see you?" he asked.

"Probably for the same reason that she didn't ask me to come and see her—because I do not want to meet her again; she's a disagreeable old thing."

"I thought she was very attractive, but even if you didn't like her, you might try to pay some attention to women as well as men. I wonder why women can't be nice to each other as men are."

He had made the comment that most men make at one time or another and that never fails to make the woman who hears angry.

"Women can be nice to each other—they are nice to each other. Mrs. Linihan isn't nice to anyone. She is horrid to her husband."

"She seemed all right to me," said Humphrey.

"Of course she did—to you. Sometimes I think that men in cities are nothing but mirrors for women to reflect in. In the country they are natural."

She was glad Humphrey did not reply. She would not have known exactly how to explain her words. She was thinking how the disapproval of Mrs. Linihan had influenced Humphrey to a keener criticism of her, which he had been afraid to put into words just then. He loved Marquita too much to want to hurt her, and to quote Mrs. Linihan at this time would have been fatal.

The next few days Marquita spent to good advantage in the shops. In her anxiety to be rightly dressed she erred on the side of too sober colors and too great simplicity, buying things more suited to a woman of thirty than a girl of eighteen. She did not show her new wardrobe to Humphrey at once, because she was afraid that he would remember Mrs. Linihan and connect the change with what that lady had said. Incidentally she spent all of her last allowance from John Gratiot and wondered whether she would ever have any more. She never once thought of asking Humphrey for money.

Their stay in New York was almost ended. Humphrey

was receiving daily letters from his father urging him not to neglect his business for his wife, and to make all possible haste, as he was needed at home.

They were standing outside a theater waiting for a cab. Marquita was smiling happily, softly humming one of the songs they had just heard. Her casual glance rested on a man who seized the opportunity to smile at her. She had never seen him before; he did not interest her; yet the smile on her lips crept up into her eyes in unconscious response, and Humphrey, turning, saw it there. In an instant he was white with anger.

"Who is that man?"

"What man?" asked Marquita innocently. "There's a cab now that's empty."

"I mean the man you were smiling at. He walked off the moment I spoke to you."

"I wasn't smiling at any man," protested Marquita. "You know I don't know any men except those you have introduced to me yourself. Don't be so unreasonable, Humphrey."

"Here, sir!" The cab-starter touched his arm to call his attention to the waiting taxi.

They were inside it before he spoke again.

"Even if you weren't smiling at him, he thought you were."

Marquita did not answer, and her silence irritated Humphrey because it destroyed his grievance. It gave him courage to voice the criticism he had been wanting to make.

"I wish you could be a bit more restrained in public; that's what makes them stare at you—and the way you dress; no wonder you attract attention."

Still Marquita did not speak, and Humphrey feared that he had gone too far and had made her angry. He took her hand, seeking as both men and women often do, to bridge by physical contact a gap that was mental and spiritual.

"Don't think I'm criticizing, dear. I don't really care how you dress—you are the most beautiful woman in the world; but I don't like to see men looking at you like that. I suppose it's just jealousy. You're so young, too. You ought not to object to being guided a bit by me, and I wish you could dress more quietly—especially now that we're going home and you will meet Mother. She's rather old-fashioned, you know."

"Don't you like the things I wear?"

There was no anger in her voice, only a sort of childish appeal. If she had loved Humphrey very deeply, she would have been both hurt and angry.

"Of course I like everything about you, but you're so pretty that *outré* clothing for you is like gilding the lily. I liked you best in your school-frocks."

"I'm a married woman now; I can't dress like a school-girl. But I have bought a lot of new things. You ought to like them; I spent all my money for them, and they make me look forty years old—they're so black and navy blue and brown—and ugly."

"I didn't mean that," said Humphrey. "I don't want you to look old, and of course whatever you wear you can't look that. I don't know exactly what I do want you to wear. I'm a man and don't understand those things. And why didn't you ask me for some money? I should have thought of it myself, but you see I'm such a beginner at being married. We both are, I guess. That's why we make mistakes. I'll give you some money at once, and when we get back home, I'll arrange so that you shall have an allowance of your own or charge-accounts or something."

THE thought of being called upon to supply Marquita's needs came upon Humphrey as a delightful revelation. He would have been gratified to think that she looked to him for everything. (Continued on page 136)

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A BRILLIANT story of soldier-men in action—by that soldier-man and writing man who wrote "Nach Verdun," "Zu Befehl," "The Magic of Mohammed Din," and "The Plateau of Thirst."



HERMANN, *the SNIPER*

By F. BRITTON AUSTIN

Illustrated by
OSCAR FREDERICK HOWARD

THE subaltern commanding this section of the trench sat in a hunched position in the narrow corridor of earth topped with sand-bags. His knees drawn up to serve as a support for the writing-pad, he wrote quickly between long pauses where he bit the end of his pencil and stared reflectively at the brown clay wall some two feet in front of his nose. At his side a man stood bent and motionless, peering into the lower end of a long box, very narrow in proportion to its length, which he held against the side of the trench so that the other end just rose above the wall barred by the traverse—the thick dividing-wall of earth that would localize the effect of a shell-burst or a bomb. All was quiet. The subaltern might have imagined that only he and the lookout at his side remained buried in this flat landscape where once two armies had flung fire and noise and steel at one another, hidden from the sight of those who should have come to tell him that the war was over and the armies stolen away. He did not so imagine. Ever present to his mind was the parallel line of sand-bags some fifty yards away, between him and which stretched a tangle of wire overgrown with rank grasses and tufts of grain. That parallel line was the great permanent fact in his existence. He knew it in its aspect better than he had ever previously known anything on this earth. Not a spot on that apparently deserted wall might change without his being interested to the quick. Even as he wrote, the feeling and the knowledge of it were concrete in his brain, constraining him to this cramped attitude.

Since October this wall of his had fronted the other wall, and now it was June. For nine long months, through snow and rain and sunshine, from the long drear nights to the long pitiless days, these two walls had remained the same, sheltering the same lurking enemities though the individuals who temporarily incarnated them came and

went. Sometimes ablaze with stabs of darting flame, erupting bombs lobbed with a deceptive innocent slowness through the air, belching a mass of men who ran and stumbled and fell in an infinite variety of ways—men who shouted and who screamed so that their voices pierced the appalling uproar; and sometimes the walls stretched blank across the fields in a deathly stillness as to-day. Their position had never altered. The quagmires between them, crisscrossed with barbed wire, had grown up into a waste of grass and nodding poppies that nearly hid what looked like bundles of weather-stained old clothes whence came a sickening, all-pervading smell. Behind each wall hundreds of men had died or been carried away, maimed and broken, a lifelong burden for some human heart. Not a sand-bag of those piled to make the parapet which sheltered the subaltern but might have had a man's name written on it in memory of a life suddenly extinguished. The necrology of the opposing parapet would have been as full.

In the hush which brooded over so much death, past and to come,—a pause, it would seem, while the overhanging invisible demon of war reflected on its work,—a mood of questioning, of revolt, came over the subaltern.

"On a quiet evening like this, one cannot help moralizing a little," he wrote, "wondering what it's all for and what we purchase with our death. This constant murdering of individuals on both sides who commit the crime of inadvertently showing an inch of head—how does this help matters?" The sharp crack of a rifle somewhere along the trench caused the officer to raise his head, listening with all his faculties at strain. The lookout at his side did not stir; no report followed the first; and the subaltern bent himself again to his letter. "I don't want to appear squeamish, fine-stomached in this rough game, but I don't think I shall ever be able to kill cold-bloodedly. I have been unfitted by long centuries of culture—"

He was interrupted by the appearance of another officer who squirmed himself round the traverse with a very pronounced stoop, necessitated by his uncommon tallness. The fair-mustached, boyish face of the newcomer was radiant with glee.

"I say, Lennard!" he said impetuously. "Ripping luck! We've just bagged Fritz! You heard the shot just now? Folwell, my sergeant, got him. Been waiting for him for over an hour, without moving a muscle. Topping chap, Folwell—all he said was: 'Married life don't seem to 'ave spoilt my aim, sir.' You remember, he asked for leave to get married?"

Lennard abandoned his letter and lighted a cigarette.

"I wonder whether Fritz was married," he said with a little malicious smile, the ideas recently in possession of him firing a final shot in a faint rear-guard action with the returning everyday occupants. "Well, that's one more nuisance abated."

"Rather!" said the other, seating himself and likewise lighting a cigarette. "Fritz must have bagged not less than a dozen of our chaps," he calculated, gazing reflectively at the trim spiral of tobacco-smoke which ascended straight in the still evening air. "Well, he's gone, thank the Lord! And we got Hans yesterday and Karl the day before. I must have a pot at old Hermann. If we could bag him, we might hope for a quiet life."

Lennard nodded. Each one of the German snipers—if sufficiently lucky to carry on his profession for a day or two—acquired an individuality and a name. Hermann was an especially dangerous neighbor who lurked somewhere in a ruined cottage that lay between the lines where they bent a way slightly from each other. He rarely fired except to kill, and hid himself so well that not one of the numerous patrols sent out had succeeded in discovering his lair.

The two subalterns chatted awhile over their cigarettes, while the red gold of the western sky faded into rose. They talked of the little incidents of mess and trench, magnified by their isolation from the main stream of life, and then, harking back, of the things that once had been so important to them in London—town and were now so

dwindled and remote. A year ago Lennard had been a critic who was read, Wilson, the tall subaltern, a painter whose first success was hanging on the line. Both were, or had been, highly polished products of what we proudly called civilization. As they talked, the old scenes came back to them, obliterating the present. At last Wilson rose, responsive to a subtle inner sense of time measured, independent of his consciousness.

"Well, so long, old thing!" he said, standing up and straightening his tall form, fatigued with so much bending. The momentary forgetfulness was fatal. On the instant a rifle cracked, and the lanky subaltern collapsed as

though his knees had been knocked from under him.

"My God!" cried Lennard, limp-paralyzed by this brutally tragic reassertion of his environment. Trembling, his heart seeming to stop and swell within him, he bent down to his friend. He touched mere clothed flesh, heavy and inert, on which the flies had already settled. They buzzed away, indignantly asserting their right of pasture. A madness of anger at this wanton annihilation of a life that was not just a dull living but an irradiation of the spirit, connoting civilization, highly conscious, swept over him. He burst into a torrent of incoherent wrathful curses.

"That was 'Ermann, sir,'" said the observer at the periscope. "I spotted the flash—in among them bricks."

Lennard rose, fiercely vengeful.

"Let me look. Where did you see the flash?"

"Three o'clock from that bit of green-stuff in the middle, sir," replied the man, ceding his place at the periscope. "You'll see a dark spot—that's 'is loop'-ole."

Lennard gazed down into the mirror of the instrument. There was just light enough for him to pick up the spot indicated.

"Very good!" He strode with bent back down the trench, muttering to himself.

It was night when, rifle in hand, the subaltern swung himself nimbly over the parapet. For some minutes he lay flat on the ground at the other side, not moving an inch. Over his head the crack-crack of rifles and the loud, rapid hammer-taps of the Maxims recommenced their fusillade against the heaps of bricks. From the first shade of dusk he had arranged that a constant enfilading fire be kept up on the sniper's lurking-place. He had no intention of letting Hermann slip away—yet.

He raised his head slightly, fixed his bearings in the gloom and then, still prone, began to nip a way through the wire entanglement. A German flare went up, dazzling with a ghastly light, too brilliant for distinct vision. He lay motionless. As it descended and fizzled out upon the ground, he had a clear view of his course. He was aiming at a point in front of the German wire whence he could

His victim was a writer of songs that his wife had loved to sing and he to hear.



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enfilade the gap between the heap of bricks and the hostile parapet. Over his head the hard, sharp cracks of his own men's fire followed one another continuously. They would not cease for nearly fifteen minutes yet. Meanwhile Hermann would be lying close.

The subaltern cut and wrenched furiously at the wire and wriggled forward, grimly disdainful of the barbs that plucked and tore his clothes. Again and again a soaring German flare stopped his progress. Clearly this incessant fusillade was making the enemy nervous. At each illumination he lay as if he were one of the bundles of old clothes that occasionally he pushed against. The British parapet darted with fire, awoke a sympathetic crackling somewhere to the right.

At last! He settled himself in a comfortable firing-position, crouched in the long damp grass. An insect, unaware in its littleness of the large death that whistled above its world, quitted a pendent blade, explored his cheek.

Crack—crack—crack! The last British rifles ceased. There was an instant's stillness, and then yet another flare shot up from the suspicious German trench. It fell, sizzled—illuminating the ruins that he watched with all his faculties focused, all his nerves coming to a point on his trigger finger—and then the world plunged into blackness. There was silence and impenetrable darkness.

Minute after minute dragged slowly past in a dead hush. Finger on trigger, every fiber tense, the prone figure waited. A primeval self awoke in him—a savage who stalked and could indefinitely maintain his ambush. His senses were as though hyperstimulated by some strange drug. A grim, patient lust to kill reigned in him.

The minutes passed slowly, slowly. He looked to one of them, not yet arrived, as to a term. When? He felt it approaching, concentrated to a still acuter degree his attention. The trigger seemed to be pressing against his finger. What was that? Surely something was moving there in the gloom, by the ruin. Why did not the flare he had ordered go up? His whole soul went out in a desperate prayer for it as he held his breath and strove with bated eyes against the darkness.

Suddenly the craved-for light shot up. Perception and trigger-pressure were instantaneous with the flash of the discharge. A running, stooping figure pitched headforemost before the stab of flame from the rifle.

Immediately a vicious fire from the German parapet answered this impertinence. The slayer lay still as death, listening with painfully acute perception to the ugly *phat!* of bullets in the earth around him. A bomb fell, burst with a deafening report and a blinding flash of flame so close that he marveled at his escape. By an effort of will he choked down the cough that the fumes provoked.

Rifle-fire at night is infectious. A sporadic and probably harmless duel sputtered up and down the trenches. At last a gun, way back somewhere, sent over a shell, and as

though obedient to this protest from their big brother, the rifles were silenced one by one. The opposing trenches again lay in darkness and quiet.

The subaltern, assuring himself that all was still, wriggled forward to the body of his victim, lay full-length beside it. Quicky he ran through the dead man's pockets, stuffed a bundle of papers into his own. Then, a rifle in each hand, he crawled back to his own parapet, climbed over and lay down. In an instant he was sound asleep.

It was bright morning when he awoke. High up, a lark was pouring out its cheerful song. He sat up, rubbed his eyes, saw the two rifles and remembered with a smile. Close by him a man was heating some coffee in a mess-tin over an alcohol flame. The subaltern asked for some and drank it with a pleasant physical sense of his body that was still alive and could drink. It warmed him. Then he remembered the papers he had taken from the unlucky Hermann. Sipping at the coffee, he read a letter that was among them.

"Dearest Wife and Sweetheart," it ran, "I don't altogether like the hatred of these Englishmen that your letter expresses. They only do their duty as we do ours, and they fight well. Would all this killing were over and we were friends again! It is in a sacred cause, I know—we could not let our *Kultur* be stifled; but the sacrifices are heavy. I sometimes wonder whether the old days will ever return, and I shall once more write songs for you to sing in London and in Paris. . . . I can faintly hear a nightingale somewhere—or is it you?—I must close now as I am just ordered off to a dangerous post, and the dawn will soon be breaking. All the love of—Karl."

Leppard, moved by a sudden curiosity, looked at the superscription of the envelope, ready addressed. Evidently the sniper had put it in his pocket and forgotten to give it to his comrades before setting out. The name was familiar. He coupled it with another: Karl—. His victim was a writer of songs his wife had loved to sing and he to hear. He sat for a moment gazing thoughtfully at the letter, yet without definite thoughts. Then with a sigh he rose.

Instantly a bullet smacked against the sandbags, missing his head by a couple of inches.

"Bad shot,

that!" he murmured to himself as he ducked. "It was certainly a lucky thing for me that I bagged old Hermann!"



A mood of questioning, of revolt, came over the subaltern as he scribbled his penciled lines.



Zelda
Sears

ZELDA SEARS is a sort of marine in the fine arts—actress and author too. She has written here an authentic story of stage life.

A Certain SOMETHING

By ZELDA
SEARS

Illustrated by
WILL GREFÉ

MARION LEE was walking westward on Forty-second Street. It was hot—hotter than June has any right to be, even in New York. But Marion didn't mind. Why should she? Her new hat was an undoubted success, and it sat at a most modish angle, disclosing on one side a sweep of dark hair groomed to satin smoothness and *ondulée* to the last degree. On the other side the brim dipped down to the thin line of an eyebrow equally groomed and polished and sophisticated. Her gloves were new, and their silk barely concealed the fact that her nails vied with her hair and brows in magnificence. The shoes, the high heels of which left little crescents stamped in the warm asphalt as she crossed Fifth Avenue, were new and smart, and her linen frock was of a newness and smartness almost unbelievable. So why should Marion waste a thought upon the thermometer?

Anyway, it wasn't far from the shabby rooming-house she was leaving behind her on Lexington Avenue in the upper Forties to the well-bred splendor of the San Bernardino, awaiting her on Broadway in the lower Sixties. And if one chooses to walk, carrying a handbag in one hand and a gayly flowered bandbox in the other, well, it's one's own business, isn't it?

Even the lavender-man smiled at Marion as she passed the spot where, summer and winter, he chants his never-changing "Lavender! Sweet lavender—sweet lavender!"

Lavender! Its faint fresh odor followed her as she sped westward, casting a spell over her thoughts. It conjured up visions of shady village streets and shady village gardens full of pansies and mignonette and love-lies-a-bleeding and rose-wreathed cottages where sheltered women did their simple daily tasks, and dim, fragrant garrets, where are tenderly treasured wedding-dresses and bridal-veils and old love-letters and babies' christening robes—all the things women are prone to treasure in loving remembrance and in lavender.

And Marion's eyes grew tender—tender in spite of the mascara on their lashes. And there was a something in her face that drew many a glance as she threaded her swift way through the crowded streets. But of all those glances none was sufficiently keen to penetrate the fact that in spite of her bravery of apparel, Marion was a failure. She not only was a failure, but she knew it. That which she had mistaken for the sacred fire had proved so unmistakably a tallow dip!

She remembered exactly when the thought of a "career" entered her mind, the night she electrified her little hometown—Barlow's Falls, Kansas—by her performance of *Josephine* in "Pinafore," for the benefit of the Ladies Library. Poor "Pinafore!" How many crimes have been committed in its name! Then came a religious cantata "Esther the Beautiful Queen," given under the auspices of the Methodist Church so successfully that it was repeated three times—to a steadily dwindling audience. The next milestone in her career was the engagement to sing eight times a day in the sole moving-picture palace Barlow's Falls boasted. It is perhaps a question whether the word *palace* can be applied with accuracy to a one-story edifice, some eighteen feet wide by forty long, formerly occupied by the Little Gem lunch-room. But at any rate it was labeled "Palace" by its proprietor, and he paid Marion the magnificent salary of twelve-fifty for her week's work, thereby bestowing upon her a semiprofessional *cachet* that was the secret envy of the majority of her friends and associates, many of whom had "taken vocal" quite as long and assiduously as had Marion and entirely failed to understand her local preëminence.

Then came her mother's death, the realization that she was entirely without family ties, twenty-four years old, the possessor of something like five hundred dollars—and that the world lay before her.

Of course, on the other hand, there was Abner. They had *always* been Abner, and that in itself is a fearful handicap for a suitor. Dear, good-tempered, good-hearted, but slow-moving, slow-minded Abner Baker, proprietor of the most flourishing dry-goods establishment in that part of the State!

"Of course, I know I'm older'n you are, Marion," he had said wistfully, "but the store's doing fine, and I thought if you liked the idea, we'd build on those lots I've got looking down the river. It's right pretty over there. And you could keep a girl,—two if you wanted 'em,—and you could have an automobile and—and everything. I'd take awful good care of you, Marion."

But Marion had shaken her head and gently but firmly explained that there was not room in her life for both matrimony and a career; she also explained at some length

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age life.

Marion tried with every fiber of her being to do his will. But before she had finished the first page, Rinaldo stopped her. "No," he said. And: "It can't be learned by study; it's a certain something—"



her burning necessity for self-expression and the demand of her soul for wider horizons than Barlow's Falls afforded. Abner listened humbly and forthwith retired into the background, trying to forget the dull ache in his heart in even closer attention to an already flourishing business. Meanwhile, Marion blithely set forth to conquer the world of art.

HOW well she remembered her first day in New York! Many had been the warnings Barlow's Falls breathed into the ear of its adventurous daughter concerning the dangers with which a great and wicked city besets the path of strangers—particularly female strangers. Mindful of these, she decided to go to the Waldorf-Astoria. Surely a hotel whose name had penetrated even unto further Kansas would be "safe." But contemplation of the bill for her first meal convinced Marion that however secure a haven morally, financially the Waldorf-Astoria was no place for her. Even the most elementary education in mathematics can cope with the fact that four dollars and thirty-five cents, multiplied by three times a day, into five hundred dollars, won't go—that is, it won't go for very long. Of course, at that optimistic period Marion confidently believed that by the end of two or three weeks some manager would have snapped her up. However, she reasoned that even the possession of a fortune like five hundred dollars does not justify one in absolutely throwing money away; so she sought out a boarding-house quite as respectable though infinitely less expensive than the Waldorf, and waited for her career to materialize.

May drifted into June; June melted into July; and July blazed into August before Marion uneasily began to admit that so far as she was concerned, managers were not snapping so ravenously as she had led herself to believe. As the time lengthened and the five hundred dollars shrank, the character of Marion's quest gradually underwent a change. In her earlier dreams she had never seen herself as anything less than a prima donna. At the end of the first month she began faintly to glimpse the almost insurmountable obstacles that lay between her inexperience and even the most insignificant rôles; and by October she was desperately glad to take a place in the Colosseum chorus, playing two performances a day, making eight changes of costumes during each performance, climbing three flights of stairs for each change—all for the magnificent salary of fifteen dollars a week.

At this time Marion's soul was fortified with the memory of much contemporary fiction in which the heroines had come to New York as she had done, and by dint of strict application to business and an almost superhuman degree of moral rectitude in the face of tremendous temptation, had attained to dizzy heights in the theatrical profession and a highly desirable husband in the last chapter.

Consequently Marion became the model chorus-girl of the Colosseum. She was always on time to the minute; she gave instant and unquestioning obedience to those in authority; she knew every note of the score, every step of every dance; and although the assaults upon her virtue were almost negligible, such as they were, she repulsed them. In every respect she conformed to the requirements of the heroine of contemporary fiction dealing with life on the stage. But somehow nothing came of it. Unhappily, in real life, true worth is seldom spectacular and often overlooked.

At first Marion cherished the hope that the prima donna would break down in the middle of the performance and that she, Marion, would take her place at a moment's notice, rise magnificently to the occasion, electrifying the management and such of the public as happened to be present. But this dream faded as had so many others. She came to realize that the prima donna had the constitution of an ox and the determination of—a prima donna. Also that in the highly improbable event of her collapse,

she, Marion, would stand no ghost of a chance to take her place, unless she accomplished the assassination of a particularly capable and vigilant understudy.

For the first season or two she kept up a desultory search for a problematical better engagement, but the encouragement was very meager. She found managers' offices and theatrical agencies always more and more overcrowded, and although at the beginning of each season she assured herself it was to be her last at the Colosseum, as each season waned and the management offered its most desirable chorus-girls the same work at the same wage for the coming season's spectacle, Marion always signed the contract.

But this spring there had been a difference. No contract had been offered her. She had taken it for granted that the omission was an oversight, and after waiting a day or so for the office to realize its mistake, she had ventured into the administrative department to call attention to it. But there had been no mistake. The only oversight had been on Marion's own part. She had overlooked the fact that when one embarks upon a career at twenty-four, the passage of five years is almost certain to land one perilously close to twenty-nine, and the purveyors of youth and beauty to the jaded tastes of Broadway consider twenty-nine well over the dead-line, while thirty is senile decay. This was briefly—very briefly—explained to Marion by one of the many executives of the huge playhouse. His only addition to the bare facts was the remark that business is business.

SO in desperation she began again the dreary round of employment-hunting. She waited hours in the stuffy anterooms of theatrical magnates, only to be rewarded—if she eventually reached the august presence at all—with a curt "Nothing doing!" She was snubbed by impudent office-boys and cowed by haughty stenographers. Everywhere the final result was the same.

There was only one case in which even the faintest hope was born in her breast. It was in the office of the greatest of them all—Rinaldo, the very pinnacle of the structure of the theater, Rinaldo, the wizard, with the gentle voice and the face of a medieval monk from which look the eyes of a modern captain of industry. He listened in silence to Marion's statement of her case. When the recital ceased, he continued his study of her, abstractedly, impersonally, as a sculptor might study a block of marble before beginning work upon it.

"The type!" he murmured finally. "Absolutely the type."

From the desk before him he produced a thin brown-paper pamphlet containing a dozen type-written pages.

"This is only a 'bit,'" the soft voice continued, "but a very important one. Believe me when I say great reputations have been founded on less than this. Read it to me."

Marion's hands shook as she took the manuscript.

"No," said the gentle voice when she had finished. "You don't understand. This woman's happiness is wrecked and broken. She has lost everything that makes life worth living. Even hope—the immortal—is almost gone! I must hear that in your voice, see it in your face! Read it again. . . .

"No," the gentle voice was gentle as ever when the second reading was over. "You read very intelligently—but that won't do! What I want must come, not from here,"—he touched his forehead,—"but from here." He laid his hand upon his heart. "Look back into your own past—don't you know anything of heartbreak and agony and bitterness of spirit? Re-create all you yourself have ever known of suffering, and pour it into the sufferings of this poor creature you are trying to portray!"

Marion tried with every fiber of her being to do his will. But before she had finished the first page Rinaldo stopped her. "No," he said. "No!" Strange how gentle a voice could be so inexorable. The part was taken from her hands, and the interview was at an end.

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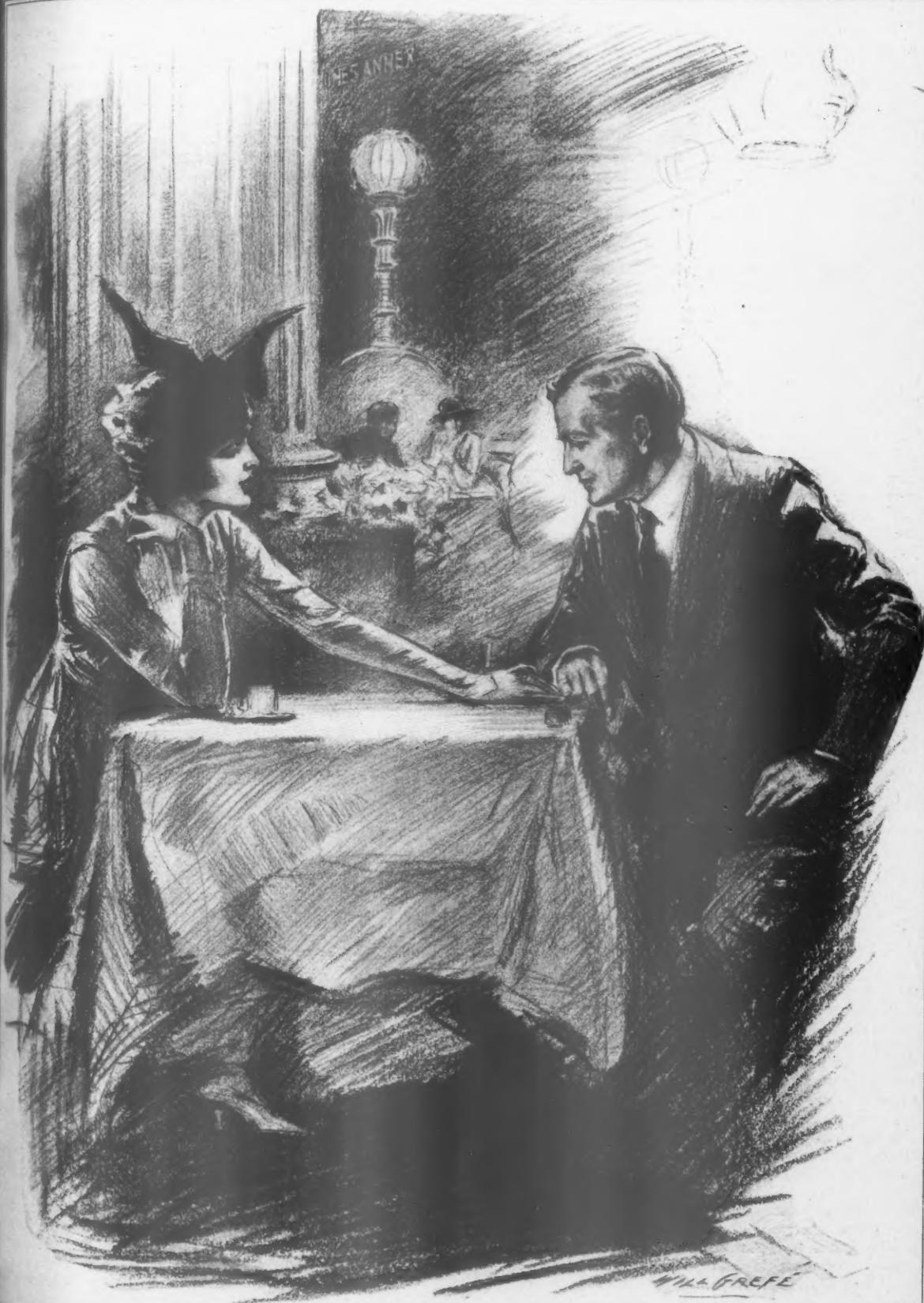
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did the glittering circle on her finger, and there rose a prayer in her heart that she might be worthy the love of this kindly, simple, decent man. "See," she whispered, "it fits me perfectly." "Yes," he answered, "you and she are just about the same size."



"Perhaps if I took the part home and studied it—" The great man shook his head.

"It can't be learned by study; it's a—a something—a certain something—"

Tears were rising in the girl's eyes as she said: "I'm sorry."

"Believe me, my child, I am sorry too." And as she stumbled over the threshold, she heard the gentle voice murmuring regretfully: "The type! Absolutely the type!"

Marion's great opportunity had come to her and she had proven inadequate.

So, in view of the foregoing, there is no reasonable doubt that Marion was a failure, and that she knew it. But there was just one bitter drop her cup did not contain. Barlow's Falls did not know it. To those she had left behind, she was still a figure of romance. Many a one among her former friends sighed enviously thinking of Marion and her courage in casting off the dull bondage of life in Barlow's Falls. Many a young matron, impatient with a humdrum husband and a teething baby, petulantly voiced a wish to goodness that *she* had had sense enough to go to New York and get to be an actress like Marion Lee instead of tying herself down with a couple of young ones in a dull little hole of a town where nothing ever happens from year's end to year's end.

In fact, to her home town, Marion Lee had become a legend.

FORTUNATELY for the preservation of the haze of glory with which distance had enshrouded her, the citizens of "the Falls" were a home-keeping folk. In five years the only one who had ventured so far afield as the Atlantic seaboard was Abner. Up to the time when Marion became a citizen of the more or less gay metropolis, Abner had fared no farther than Kansas City or Chicago on his merchandising trips. But now, once a year, his fellow-townspeople said to one another, "Abner's gone to New York on a buying-trip," with a touch of civic pride, a consciousness of being completely, if vicariously, in touch with the great marts of trade.

Then a little later each year the feminine half of the little city received neat cards of invitation to a "Grand Opening" at Abner's establishment, and it was during the progress of this function that Abner was asked most often:

"Did you run across Marion Lee this trip?"

To this he always responded in the affirmative, and to further catechising he supplied a wealth of detail about the beautiful apartment she had, parlor, bedroom and bath, in a smart hotel right on Broadway; and whether they believed him or not, it never cost a cent less than thirty or thirty-five dollars a week—no, not a month, a week! And he said that she knew everybody and went everywhere and that she looked wonderful and dressed—well, he didn't mind saying that so far's he knew, there wasn't a woman in New York had prettier clothes, and he didn't mind saying there wasn't one that knew better how to wear 'em, if she *did* come from Kansas! And also, that even in her ceaseless round of gayety she remembered everybody and sent friendly messages to half the town. After listening to his recital, at least three fourths of his audience went home to its supper—the third meal of the day is still "supper" in Barlow's Falls—meditating on its wasted life.

Now, Abner Baker was an absolutely truthful man, and every word he spoke concerning Marion he believed to be the truth; therefore it will be seen that there were vital dissimilarities between Marion's career as it really existed, stunted, crippled, all but stillborn, and Marion's career as it appeared, glittering and glorious, in the mind of Barlow's Falls.

And the explanation was this: To use an ancient and overworked metaphor, for fifty weeks of the year Marion was a grub, while for the remaining two—the fortnight of

Abner's annual visit—she was a butterfly of the most vividly brilliant description. And be it said, concerning the former fraction of her existence, that life in New York on fifteen dollars a week is very, very grubby indeed. And Marion had been able to count on that slender stipend for only nine or ten months of the year.

The little bedroom in the lodging-house that had been her home for the past four years—boarding-houses had long since been relinquished as too expensive—was too small to hold anything more than her cot bed, a diminutive bureau and one chair. Her battered steamer-trunk was relegated to the basement, four flights below. The register admitted little heat in winter, and the window admitted little air in summer. Hidden high on the top shelf of the closet a tiny alcohol stove hinted at scanty and surreptitious breakfast. Her one other daily meal was taken at a neighboring lunch-room more to be recommended for its cheapness than for the quality or quantity of the food. It was fortunate for Marion that extreme slenderness was the mode of the moment.

For eleven months of the year she walked to save carfare; she went insufficiently clad in winter; she scrimped and saved and all but starved to pile painful penny upon painful penny. But Abner's letter announcing the approach of his annual visit was as the ray of sun that warms the chrysalis to life.

For weeks she had been haunting the great shops, "looking," and now she knew how to give each one of her hoarded dollars the purchasing power of three. When, arrayed in purple and fine linen, she made a preliminary visit to the San Bernardino, she bargained to the ultimate cent for a fortnight's occupancy of the suite with the luxuries which, thanks to Abner's powers of description, Barlow's Falls knew so thoroughly. Then on the day which was to welcome him to New York she migrated from Lexington Avenue to Broadway; and presto, change! For two brief weeks Marion the grub became Marion the butterfly.

Five successive years had Marion accomplished the transfer of her belongings from East Side to West Side, and five successive times had she moved them back again. But she felt that this particular trip was to be the last.

Not that there had been anything in Abner's letter differing in the slightest degree from any letter he had ever written her. For five years he had never once stepped outside the rôle to which she had assigned him, that of devoted, sympathetic, admiring friend. But deep in her heart Marion felt that at a word from her all that would change. And she was ready to speak that word. Up to a month ago she had somehow cherished a small secret hope—utterly ridiculous though she knew it to be—that even at the eleventh hour some little fraction of some one of her dreams of success might come true; but now that hope was dead; she saw herself by the clear light of truth, her youth gone, her faith in herself gone, even the pitiful little surety of fifteen dollars a week—that was gone too!

But she wasted no time in vain repinings. Rather she thanked what gods there be that at last her eyes were open, that she could tell the gold from the tinsel and that the gold was still within her grasp.

WHEN she closed the door of her little room for the last time, she felt that she was closing the door upon a whole phase of her existence. Her fruitless struggle was ended; she was ready and glad to resign her life into stronger, more competent hands. Surrendering the latchkey to the landlady, she gave the ceremony all the finality of a lasting farewell.

The landlady was constitutionally fat and chronically melancholy.

"Dear me," she said, "I shall certainly miss you. I never expect to see no better-behaved hall-room-back than you are. I've got a heart in my (Continued on page 159)

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page 159)



The lady gasped faintly, in sheer wonder. "Rinaldo!" she exclaimed. "Are you sure, dearie? He don't produce nothing but dramas—they don't use no chorus!"

IN his new novel Rupert Hughes says "Nothing keeps the mind in balance on the tight-rope of sanity like the counter-weight that comedy furnishes to tragedy." Which is very, very true. Lincoln could not have borne the burdens which were piled upon his shoulders had he lost the ability to appreciate a joke. Therefore, let's give thanks for the Ring Lardners of to-day.

They show us the silver lining to dark clouds.

The General asked if we would please get up and leave him, as he felt rather nauseated.



A CHIP of the Old BLOCK

By RING W.
LARDNER

WEEDSBURG, May 16.

Illustrated by
QUIN HALL

Quin Hall

DEAR Grandfather:

How can I thank you for remembering me on my twenty-first birthday with such a wonderful present? I know how you feel about spending money recklessly, and I assure you I will not throw it away on foolish luxuries. In fact, I have about made up my mind not to spend it at all, but to deposit the check in the savings bank and not draw it out until actually necessary. Perhaps I will keep it until the next Liberty Loan is announced and buy a Liberty Bond with it, because I think a person ought to do all they can for the Government at a time like this. Thanks ever so much, dear Grandfather, and I wish there was some way in which I might show my appreciation otherwise than mere words.

I suppose you are like all the rest of us and crazy to get the papers every day and find out the latest about what is going on "over there." The news has been rather discouraging lately, don't you think? But Mother and I both think things will improve fast as soon as Gen. Pershing gets enough men so that he can begin to really do something. How splendidly the French and British have been fighting, and how glad they will be when we come to their rescue! But I guess the Kaiser wont be so glad.

I have not made up my mind as yet just what to do. The other night I spoke to Mother about enlisting in the Navy, and just talking about it affected her so that I gave up the idea. Once a few weeks ago I mentioned the aviation, but she said it seemed such a terrible waste to go into that branch, as most of the aviators were accidentally killed before they ever got to do any fighting.

So, as I say, I don't know exactly what to do, and there is no one here whom we can rely on to give me advice. Mr. Leslie, who was one of Father's old friends and in the Spanish War with him, said yesterday that if he were I, he would not worry, but would wait until the next draft. But there are several reasons why I don't like to do that. In the first place, there might be some other way in which I could serve my country to better advantage. Then it takes so long for a man to be called after he is drafted, and then he is kept in training for months before they send him anywhere. Besides, I sup-

pose the men in charge of the drafting make mistakes the same as everybody else, and I might be overlooked entirely or left out in some way, and then it might be too late for me to do anything.

However, Mother is going to write soon to Congressman Shultz and see if he can give us any advice. I must do something to keep up the family record and follow in the footsteps of you and poor Dad, and I only wish it was the Germans who had killed Dad instead of the Spaniards, so I could avenge his death or at least try to.

Well, Grandfather, thanks again for the check, and I know how you hate to write, so I wont expect an answer to this letter, but we will let you know the news as soon as there is any.

Your affectionate grandson,

EVAN.

P. S. I looked up in the back of the dictionary one time to see what my name meant, and it means "young warrior!" So, altogether it seems "up to me" to do something, don't you think so, Grandfather?

E.

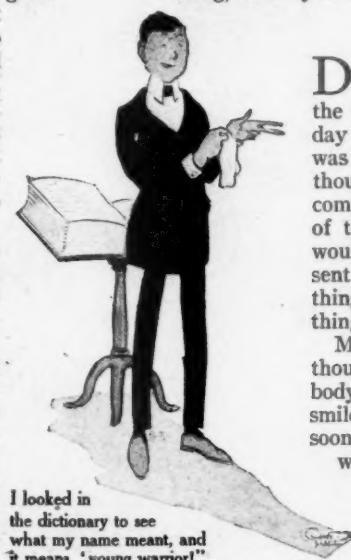
WEEDSBURG, May 30.

DEAR Grandfather:

Just a line, Grandfather, to tell you the news. Mother received a letter yesterday from Congressman Shultz saying that I was to come to Washington at once, as he thought he could arrange for me to get a commission. He did not say what branch of the service it was in, but he did say I would be located in Washington and not sent to France, so I suppose it has something to do with the secret service or something.

Mother is almost heartbroken over the thought of losing me, but I tell her everybody must be brave in times like this and smile, no matter what happens. Besides, as soon as she can find trustworthy people to whom to rent the house, she is going to follow me to Washington and keep house for me.

I know you will be pleased to hear that I am about to enter the



I looked in
the dictionary to see
what my name meant, and
it means 'young warrior!'

service, and that no one can say the grandson of a Civil War veteran and the son of a Spanish War hero failed to do his bit when his country needed him.

Mother and I were at the cemetery to-day and thought of you when we saw the G. A. R. graves being decorated.

There is no time to write more now, as I must do a lot of packing, but Mother has made me promise I will write you once a week after I get there, though I would have made it a point to do so without her asking me, knowing as I do that you must be deeply interested in everything that is going on.

Your affectionate grandson,
EVAN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 2.

DEAR Grandfather:

Well, Grandfather, here I am in the Capital, and it seems like a different world. Washington is not at all like it was when Mother and I were here in 1915. Then it was just a beautiful, staid old city, but now everything is bustle and hurry, and it gives me a thrill to think that soon I will be bustling and hurrying with the rest of them and doing my share, for everyone must do it here, as there is no room for a slacker.

I arrived this afternoon and am at the Shoreham, where I shall probably stay until Mother comes and finds a house or an apartment. I called on Congressman Shultz as soon as I arrived, but he was busy and said I was to come again to-morrow morning.

The trip was hot and dusty, but I made up my mind I would not complain because a man must get used to things and take them as they come, and I would feel pretty mean if I "kicked" at discomforts.

For some reason our sleeper was taken off at noon and we had to complete the journey in another Pullman that was already pretty well filled, but I found a seat in the smoking-compartment, though I did not have it to myself, but shared it with an elderly man about thirty-six or thirty-seven. He smoked continually and nearly choked me to death, but I was so excited about getting here and "in it" that I hardly noticed his "poison gas." I made some remark about the train being late, and I am glad I started a conversation with him, as he turned out to be rather amusing. One of the first things he said was:

"As a rule, when traveling, I shun intercourse with strangers. But how can a man be reserved when even the seats find it impossible?"

Then he asked me if I had ever been in Washington before, and I said yes, in 1915. Then he said:

"Well, young man, if you haven't been there for three years, you will find some changes. I suppose the male population then was about two hundred thousand. Now there are two hundred thousand men and three hundred thousand officers."

Of course I knew he was trying to jolly me, but I didn't mind, so I asked him what kind of officers, and he said N. C. O.'s. So I pretended I believed him and said:

"You don't mean to tell me there are actually three hundred thousand corporals and sergeants in Washington."

"No," he said. "But I do mean to tell you there are about three hundred thousand N. C. O.'s, and by that I mean noncombatant officers. I don't know whether my figure is accurate or not, but I'll make you a little bet there are more officers than men, and I'll leave it to any bellhop you care to name."

Well, I laughed and said I didn't know any "bellhops"

by name, so I was afraid his offer would have to go unchallenged. Then he asked me what I was going to do, and I told him I expected a commission, but I didn't know just yet in what branch of the service it would be. He seemed very much interested in me and asked me all sorts of questions, so finally I thought it was time to return the compliment, and I began cross-examining him. He didn't seem to mind at all and told me his name was Tracy and that he was a newspaper correspondent from Cincinnati, and he said he would like to call and see me after I had got my commission and have an interview with me for his paper. Well, I told him he might, for I suppose a man in the service must receive reporters and all kinds of people. Besides, as I said, he is rather amusing. So he asked me where I expected to stop, and I said at the Shoreham, and he said I would be right at home, because that was where most of the young N. C. O.'s were garrisoned.

"Of course," he said, "you must expect a great many inconveniences. They have no rat-traps in the rooms, and they don't dress or undress you. But you'll have to overlook those things, for you're in the army now."

I can't remember all we said, and anyway I'm afraid I have bored you with this long letter, but I thought you might be amused with his chatter. These newspaper men do get around and see life, I suppose, and their conversation is so breezy one can't help enjoying them for a while, though I suppose too much of it would prove tedious.

Well, Grandfather, good-by for this time, and I hope the warm weather agrees with you. Mother would send love if she were here.

Your affectionate grandson,
EVAN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 2.

DEAR Grandfather:

Well, Grandfather, salute your grandson, Captain Barnes. For that is what I am, Grandfather, and have

been since this morning. Congressman Shultz made good his promise, and early this week got me placed in the Sleuth Department with the title of captain. It's a pretty ticklish assignment, for I have to do all sorts of detective work, such as shadowing, eavesdropping, etc., and report to headquarters anything I learn which might lead to the apprehension of German propagandists and spies. But the more dangerous there is, why, the more excitement, and the better I will like it. Moreover a man must expect to put himself in constant peril at a time like

this, and if I can discover one plot in time to frustrate it, I will not care what is done to me in the way of vengeance. I will feel that my life has not been wasted in that case.

My one regret is that Father could not have lived to see me "make good."



But just think, Grandfather, here I am, only twenty-one and a captain, while you were only a sergeant at the end of the Civil War after being in it almost from the time it began. Of course I don't mean that seriously, and I wouldn't say anything to hurt you for the world, and I realize that conditions were different then. I also realize that you did not have the same advantage of an education which I have had, which is a big advantage after all. But doesn't it seem queer when you think of it?

Mother wired that she was glad I had made good, but warned me not to take any foolish risks. Isn't that just like a woman, to imagine a man would stop to consider risks if there was important work at hand, no matter how ticklish it might be?

My duties, of course, will keep me fairly busy, but at that my time will be practically my own. I am to report at headquarters every morning at ten, and if there is any particular assignment for the day, they will give it to me. If not, I am just to drop in at the cafés and pick up, without seeming to, any information that I think valuable. I go to work tomorrow and will soon let you know how I am getting along.

Well, Grandfather, I wont ask you to congratulate me in writing or by telegraph, for I know how you dislike to bother with things like that. But I know you are proud of me and I will try to make you even prouder by doing "something big" and perhaps rising to a higher rank.

Your affectionate grandson,
CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 11.

DEAR Grandfather:

Well, Grandfather, I have been in the service nearly a week now and have not turned up anything big yet, though I have enjoyed a few thrills, and I think the Department is working on a couple of the tips I turned in.

Well, then, Sunday night I was at dinner in the Willard and at the next table I noticed two men who looked very German. They had blond mustaches and everything. To throw them off the track, I pretended I was reading a newspaper, but you can bet I was listening to every word they had to say. Well, pretty soon I heard one of them make the remark that General Foch certainly had a job on his hands, and it wouldn't have sounded so bad if he had not pronounced the name with the guttural German "ch," but that was a "give-away." I couldn't catch just what the other replied, and I was afraid to take any chances of their getting through and leaving before I knew who they were; so I got up and went to the head waiter and asked him quietly if he knew them. He said he didn't; and while I was talking to him, one of them looked up and saw me staring at him, and he turned away as if he were afraid of being recognized. So I saw there was nothing more to do about it that night, and I merely wrote out a careful description of both men and put down what I had heard.

The other wasn't quite as positive or exciting. It happened yesterday forenoon. I was walking past the White

The neighborhood looked so disreputable that I was afraid to leave her — so I told the driver to take her back to the hotel.



House grounds on the State Department side, and two strangers were walking ahead of me, and of course their backs were turned and I couldn't see what they looked like, so I hurried up to get ahead of them so I could turn around and look at their faces. Well, just as I was passing them, one of them said: "Well, I suppose that's a

swell place to live, but I wouldn't trade jobs with old W. W. for all the White Houses in the world."

He couldn't have meant anyone else but Woodrow Wilson when he said "W. W." under those circumstances, and especially when he mentioned the White House in the same breath; so I went on and then turned around and took a long look at both of them so I could describe them at the Department. Of course the remark might have been innocent, and he might have meant the President's job was so hard he would not want it. But anyway it was my duty to report it, and I don't know whether the Department will take it up or not.

Anyway, Grandfather, you see they are keeping me busy, and I like the risk and excitement of it immensely, and I will never be satisfied till I turn up something big, and after that I suppose I will want to turn up something bigger, and so on. That's the way it usually goes.

Well, in my spare moments I have met a lot of nice people,

including a few girls—the nicest of whom unfortunately is engaged. But it always does happen that way, eh, Grandfather? The one we want is the one we can't get. Was it that way with you, or wasn't it? Most of my acquaintances, of course, are fellow-officers of my own age or a few years older, the majority of them captains in various departments, but I guess there aren't many I would trade with, for it's the constant excitement of my job that I like. Anyway, we have gay old times together in the hotel and at parties outside, and if it weren't for the military discipline, reporting every morning at ten o'clock, etc., I wouldn't ever want to return to civil life.

Mother expects to be here in a few days.

Your affectionate grandson,
CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 17.

DEAR Grandfather:

Mother came yesterday, and after we had spent nearly an hour looking for a house or an apartment that was fit to live in, we gave it up and decided to stop at the Shoreham indefinitely. I think it is much better so, for here we are right in the midst of things. All the best of the young officers are here or come here, and that means it's the social center of the town.

Last night I went to a very pretty ball and would have enjoyed it very much if I could have become interested in any of the "free lance" girls. Unfortunately the only girl who interests me that I have met here so far, is engaged to a fellow in France. He enlisted in the infantry right after we declared war and went over a year ago in July, but he is only a corporal now. Her name is Kathryn Stark, and she is "some peach." But I don't suppose you

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BARNES.
June 17.

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Well, of course, he was just talking, but it was such nonsense that I had to smile.

"And right over at that third table," he went on, "sits Capt. F. Conklin Stone of the Monument Department. He tried to enlist in the regulars, but he failed on the physical test on account of his long eyelashes. So now he's a captain, and he has to go over to the Monument three

"Haven't you met Major G. Willis Faulkner yet?" he inquired. "That's probably because he's a casualty. But you know who he is, of course."

Well, I had heard the name, and I told him so. Faulkner is a young millionaire from down South somewhere, about two years older than I and one of the youngest majors in the service.

"Major Faulkner was on the casualty list about ten days ago," Tracy went on. "He is a major in the Cushion Corps. His job was to go out to the ball-park every afternoon and keep track of the number of balls lost or injured. Of course it would have been a cinch if the home team here had been the only team playing, because they could use one ball a whole season and then sell it for new. But some of the visiting teams sometimes fouled balls off into the stand or over it, or roughened them up with their bats; so the Major was kept pretty busy. But he was making good when a careless vendor hit him in the head with a sack of peanuts, and he got shell shock."

Well, of course, he was just talking, but it was such nonsense that I had to smile.

"And right over at that third table," he went on, "sits Capt. F. Conklin Stone of the Monument Department. He tried to enlist in the

regulars, but he failed on the physical test on account of his long eyelashes. So now he's a captain, and he has to go over to the Monument three

We are planning to be married in the fall, and I am confident we can get along on my salary.



times a week and look up and see if the top is still on it. It's bound to give him stiff neck in time, but you'd think to look at him that he didn't have a worry in the world."

"And the captain at the table near the window," Tracy continued, "is Captain Jarvis Bellows of the Toy Balloons. He would have tried for the Marines, but he had a hangnail. So now he has to buy a couple of uninflated balloons every day from a street-hawker, and bring them here to give to some of the guests' kids."

And of course he has to blow them up first. And believe me, if one of them ever busted in his face it would be good night! Besides that, he's got

his own Rolls-Royce, and some day it's going to get away from him and bang into the Treasury Building, and if his head is thrown hard enough against the side of the building, he'll be laid up a week. So you see you aren't the only man in the army who is taking chances."

Well, Grandfather, he talked on that way all through the meal until I was nearly worn out with it, and I suppose I have worn you out too, but I haven't told you half. However, I have written a long letter and Mother will be wondering why I don't take her to dinner.

Your affectionate grandson,

CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 24.

DEAR Grandfather:

Well, Grandfather, I thought I was going to turn up something big yesterday, but it was a false scent; at least, so I was told this morning at the Department. However, I am grateful to Tracy, my newspaper acquaintance, for giving me the tip, and it's a good thing to stand well with a man like him because he gets around and sees everybody and everything and may some day give me a clue that will amount to something.

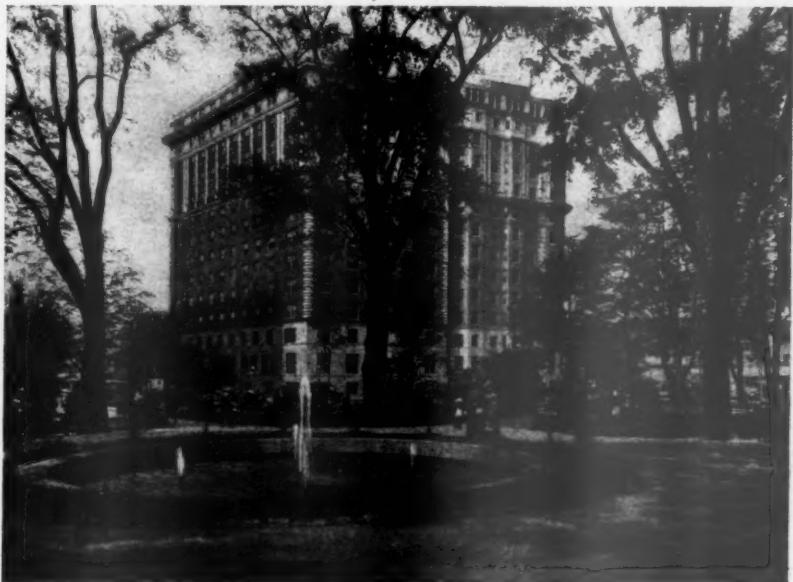
He called me up yesterday forenoon just after I had reported at the Department and had returned to the hotel to take Mother for a drive. He said if I would meet him at a certain place on the Avenue, he thought he could put me on the trail of a big conspiracy. So I asked him if it had to be right away, as I had promised to take Mother driving, and he said he thought it would be very dangerous to delay even for two or three hours. So I apologized to Mother and went down to meet him.

When I met him, he said we mustn't be seen talking together in such a prominent place because no one knew who was watching us; so we went into a drugstore where there was only one customer, a girl, and the clerk, and he told me he had just heard that (Continued on page 106)



I went to the head waiter and asked him quietly if he knew them.

A VERY American novel, with its scenes laid in DETROIT, where there is almost as much activity today as there is on the Western front.



Grand Circus Park, in downtown Detroit.

From "Beautiful Detroit," published by The Dietrich Sight Seeing Company.

The HIGH FLYERS

On this page is a résumé of the opening chapters

DETROIT and its gilded youth were flying high indeed, those early days of the war, for automobile and munitions manufacture had made many of them rich. Specially prominent among the high-flying young men of the town was Potter Waite, son of the great automobile-magnate Fabius Waite. And this literally as well as figuratively, for Potter was an enthusiastic amateur aviator. So it was that Hildegarde von Essen, the high-spirited daughter of Hermann von Essen, kept teasing Potter to take her for a flight in his machine.

When news came of the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Potter hurried to his father, whom he found in conference with a United States Senator.

"What can it mean but war?" said Potter after he had told them the news. But the elder Waite, and the Senator as well, were too absorbed in business to feel the thing as Potter did; they felt that a conflict must be averted.

Disgusted with his father's and his friends' apathy, Potter marched out. That night he suddenly turned from the table at which he had been drinking, to the easy-going, easy-spending crowd in the Hotel Frayne and said: "It's a rotten country, and you're a rotten lot of men, . . . a lot of crawling, sneaking, penny-chasing rabbits. Brag and blow—that's you. And then somebody kills your wives and babies, and you haven't the nerve to kill back."

And to show that he at least had the nerve to fight, Potter sailed into the crowd—and wound up with a broken head in the police-station.

Next day he went golf-playing to soothe his nerves and met Hildegarde von Essen. She badgered him into a match—the stakes being a flight in his airplane. She won, and though Potter hated to let her take the risk, he promised to pay his bet the following Tuesday.

Before that date, however, Potter made two interesting acquaintances. One was a man named Cantor, who brought letters of introduction and said in too precise English that he had come to Detroit to investigate the automobile market for an investment syndicate. The other acquaintance was a Major Craig of the United States Army, who sought to win Potter's interest in the need for airplanes.

Tuesday came, and Potter took Hildegarde on a flight over Lake St. Clair. But over a tiny island on Muscamoot Bay the machine collapsed, and they fell.

Dazed and crippled, Potter crawled out of the wreck and saw Hildegarde lying senseless near by. Then he was conscious of a man running to him, bending over him. "How do you do, Cantor?" Potter said, and then fainted.

The man he had called Cantor summoned two others and they got Waite and Hildegarde into a motorboat. He ordered his helpers to take the unconscious pair to the hospital in Mt. Clemens and say they had found them on the shore ten miles away. That night, he said,—in German,—they would get the wreck of the plane "across and out of the way." The morning papers reported that Potter was not expected to live the day out, but that Hildegarde would recover—also that the wrecked airplane had been found on the shore of Baltimore Bay.

Potter recovered, however; and sobered by the experience, plunged into plans and experiments for airplane building. Cantor cultivated his acquaintance; Potter found the man agreeable, and only vaguely associated him with the airplane-accident.

Hildegarde was forbidden Potter's society by her father, but she rebelled and went to see Potter in his workshop. Her father followed, roughly carried her home and forbade her to leave the house. But that night she overheard him plotting with another German to destroy the St. Clair ship canal, and her patriotism joined her resentment to provoke her to further revolt. She slipped out of the house and mailed a note to Potter Waite asking help.

Grand Con
Park, in
downtown
Detroit.

Griswold
Street, in
downtown
Detroit.

From "Beautiful
Detroit," pub-
lished by The
Dietche Sight
Seeing Company



THIS story is about the sort of folks who are your own fellow-towns-men, your own friends, enemies, acquaintances.

By CLARENCE BUDINGTON KELLAND

Who wrote those two unusual novels "*The Source*" and "*Sudden Jim*"

CHAPTER X

HILDEGARDE'S billet came to Potter at the hangar at mid-afternoon. He read it, reread it—and did no more work that day. With the letter in his hands he left his drawing-board and went into his tiny office, where he sat down to consider it—perhaps not so much to consider the letter as to consider Hildegard herself.

There was a note in the letter to which he responded instantly—an arousing note, a reckless note which called to pulsating life that heedlessness of consequences which had always been so characteristic of him. He could see her writing in white heat, could picture her as she sat at her desk with the smolder of rage in her eyes. They two were in perfect sympathy, matching daring with daring, rashness with rashness, unrest with unrest.

One point required no consideration—whether or not he would obey her summons. That he would go was natural, inevitable. Had that call come from an utter stranger, he would have responded because there was something in him that would have carried him to the spot. But something stronger than this natural urge of adventurousness called him to Hildegard, for regarding her he had reached a conclusion. As he sat with her letter in his hands, he knew it was a conclusion from which he would never waver, that a thing had happened to him which was final, that something within him had taken a stand from which there could be no recession. This conclusion was that Hildegard von Essen was the woman produced by the ages for him and for him alone.

Rage mixed with his other emotions. Hermann von Essen had handled her ungently, had pawed her about, perhaps, with those huge unsightly hands of his. The mark of his every finger was on her arm, she said. Well, he would never do it again. Potter wanted to go to the man and batter him to a pleading mass of blood and

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Illustrated by
FRANK STREET

bruises. Vaguely he hoped von Essen would discover him when he came for Hildegard. That would be his opportunity.

The thing that required thought of him was what he should do with her when he had taken her away from her father's house. The obvious solution did not occur to him at once—because it was so obvious, because, perhaps, it was the thing he so burningly desired.

Suddenly he leaped to his feet, his eyes shining, his soul uplifted with sudden joy. He would marry her; he would take her for his own. That was a solution of all their problems. In it he neglected to consider her, whether she shared his views of that matter or not; his sense that they were predestined for each other made for that neglect. He would marry her, and then she would be his to guard, to protect—to love.

In a vague way Potter determined what he would do when he had helped Hildegard to escape from her father's house. His common sense told him that he must take some steps to safeguard her as much as would be possible from the wagging of malicious tongues. Therefore, out of hand, he determined to take her immediately to his own home, to hand her over to his mother and then to scamper off for license and parson. It seemed perfectly adequate.

He dined at home. As he was leaving the table, he said to his mother: "I'll be home fairly early—probably before eleven. I wonder if you will wait up for me. There's something rather important."

"Of course, Potter," she said, no little amazed.

HE went to the garage, put extra robes into his car and drove out into the street. Hours must elapse before he could enter upon his adventure, but he could not put

off the starting; he had to be about it. It was said of Potter that he was never late for anything and usually was a little ahead of time—and it was natural that he should be. He could not bear inaction, especially if some event were promised. He had to be moving toward that event, or making himself feel he was moving toward it. So he started at eight o'clock to reach a spot not half a mile away which he knew he must not reach before ten.

He drove past the von Essen mansion, turned a mile beyond and retraced his way. He scrutinized his watch, and it seemed to him he had made no impression whatever on the time that must elapse. For several blocks he drove at a snail's pace; then he turned again and sped back over the icy pavement at a dangerous speed. Again he consulted his watch. So for two hours he drove up and down, impatient, eager, unable to quiet himself.

He saw Hermann von Essen's limousine drive away from the house, and he half determined to follow it and settle accounts with Hildegard's father. He was in a state of mind which would permit of wild actions. But he did not follow; instead he applied the brakes savagely, skidded perilously and headed in the other direction. It was bitterly cold, but he was hardly conscious of it—was conscious of nothing but a seething impatience, a sort of breathless anticipation. Again he looked at his watch, for it seemed as if he had been driving back and forth for days. It was only nine-thirty.

As he passed the von Essen house again, he peered at it eagerly. There were few lights, and those dim. The place was quieting down for the night; servants would be in bed or drowsily waiting for their master's return. Soon it would be safe to make the attempt.

After another turn or so he halted his car facing toward his own home and at a little distance from the entrance to the von Essen grounds. Snapping on his dimmers, he leaped out and walked across the street to the deeply shaded area midway between street-lights. Carefully he looked in either direction: no pedestrians were visible; the street was clear save for a distant automobile approaching from the city. He hesitated a second, then stepped from the walk into the sheltering shrubbery. With caution he dodged from dark spot to dark spot, taking pleasure in his subtle approach with a certain boyishness, a certain pretense—as if he were playing Indian. The snow reached well above his ankles, and at each step its brittle crust crackled and crashed alarmingly, but none seemed to take the alarm.

He rounded the big house in safety and stood under the window Hildegard had described as her own. There was no light. Potter crept behind a snow-shrouded bush and scrutinized it, rising cautiously to his feet and standing for an instant exposed to view. If Hildegard were watching alertly, he said to himself, she would surely see him. He waited. In a moment he could hear the window open.

"Potter," whispered Hildegard.

"Here," he said.

She disappeared but came back presently, holding out something black and bulky. "My bag," she whispered. "Catch!"

He caught it and deposited it on the snow; then, while he wondered how he was to get her down from her room, she climbed upon the window-sill and lowered herself until she hung by her fingers.

"Careful," he said with incautious loudness. "Wait."

But Hildegard was driven by the same impatience as himself. There would be no waiting for her, no caution. She loosed her hold and dropped, falling into a little heap in the snow. Potter raised her quickly.

"Hurt?" he asked.

"No," she said, "—of course not."

He picked up her bag. "My car's just across the street," he said, and they walked hurriedly toward it.

As they approached a black blot made by the shadow of a clump of ornamental shrubbery, the dark figure of a man arose, almost from under their feet, and scurried away. Potter's impulse was to give chase, but Hildegard clutched his arm.

"What in thunder?" Potter burst out angrily. "Somebody spying on us."

"Not on us," said Hildegard bitterly.

"Of course it was on us. He probably saw me sneak into the grounds and sneaked after to see what I was up to. I wonder why."

Hildegard knew it was not Potter who had been followed; undoubtedly the fellow had been set by sinister interests to keep watch on her father and her father's house. But she held her peace. It was a thing shameful to her, and one she would keep locked in the secret places of her heart. It strengthened her courage and her resolution. She was running away from her father because his proximity was contaminating. "My father!" she was thinking. "He's a traitor, a plotter."

They hastened on, and both breathed in relief as Potter assisted Hildegard into his car. He pressed the starter button, and the cold engine throbbed with a staccato, uneven, protesting roar.

"Where are we going?" Hildegard asked.

Potter shifted gears before he replied; then of a sudden it occurred to him that what he had to say presented some difficulties and was, perhaps, of a nature to startle his companion.

"Garde," he said, using for the first time the diminutive of her name, "you and I have been through some things together."

"Yes, indeed," she said.

"I think they've made us better acquainted than—that meeting at a thundering lot of parties and dances and that sort of thing. Don't you feel that you know me pretty well?"

"Do you think I'd have written that note to you if I didn't?"

He felt relieved. To be sure she must feel that way. She must think well of him, must have a certain confidence in him to have summoned him in this emergency.

"Where are you taking me?" she said a bit anxiously.

"To my house," he said, and felt her start of astonishment. "I'll tell you why." He hesitated, and then blurted out impetuously: "It's because I love you, Garde. I want you to marry me. I don't know if you've ever thought about me that way, but I've been bursting with you. Yesterday morning when you came into the hangar, I—I came pretty close to taking you into my arms right then. I had to hold back. . . . The things that have happened to us—doesn't it seem as if it were intended we should marry? That's why I'm taking you home. Mother will be waiting up—"

"Does she know?" Hildegard asked suddenly.

"No. I asked her to wait up for me. I'll leave you there and tear out after the license and a minister. I can get the license fixed up all right. The clerk is a friend of mine. And I'll kidnap a minister."

"Don't I have anything to say about it?"

He stopped, somewhat aghast. He had overrun his story. "Wont you marry me?" he said eagerly. "I love you. I'll make you happy."

To Hildegard it was all unexpected. She had not reckoned on this. Not that she had never considered Potter as a possible husband. What girl could have taken so important a part in the happenings of a man's life without at least considering that outcome? She liked him, liked him exceedingly; but she had not thought further than that. She had regarded him more in the light of an adventure, of an exciting pal, perhaps. Now she regarded him from a far different point of view. He was asking her

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As they approached a black blot made by a clump of ornamental shrubbery, the dark figure of a man arose, almost from under their feet, and scurried away. Potter's impulse was to give chase, but Hildegarde clutched his arm.

to marry him—to turn her running away from home into an elopement. Some girls might have been carried off their feet by the romance of it, but not so Hildegarde. She was not easily swept from her equilibrium. She was not calm and cool as she considered—she was excited, vibrant with stirred emotions; yet she could think collectedly.

She liked him, she told herself, liked him very well indeed. Perhaps that was love. She doubted it, but then she might be mistaken. At any rate, he would be a bully companion, and he was, she felt, trustworthy; she could marry him with confidence that he would be good to her, gentle with her, chivalrous toward her. He was rich; that was but a passing thought, but it was present. He was handsome, a husband to exhibit with pride. And marriage with him would solve her problem. She could depend upon him to hold her safe from her father. He would be a sure refuge in her emergency. And what other refuge was there? She was penniless. She would be alone in the world. Unmistakably she liked Potter.

"Are you angry?" he asked.

"No," she said.

"Do you mean—will you marry me? To-night?"

"Yes," she replied.

One arm sufficed to guide the car, while with the other he crushed her to him, panting, protesting, and kissed her averted cheek.

"Don't," she cried. "Don't!" It was a shock to her; it was reality; yet somehow she was not affronted, was more startled than displeased.

"You love me," he insisted. "Let me hear you say it."

"I—don't know," she said. "Everything is so—so confused. Everything is happening—"

"Of course," he said gently. "I'll behave myself. But you've got to love me," he said with determination. "We were meant to love each other."

They ran up the long driveway and stopped at the carriage door of Potter's house. He leaped to the step and lifted her out in his arms, and as she felt the strength of them, the promise of protection in them, she was conscious of a pleasant contentment, of something more, perhaps. She looked up into Potter's face and smiled; nor did she avert her head as he pressed his lips to hers. Yes, perhaps this was love. Certainly she was moved, stirred by this young man. If it were not love itself, she thought somewhat vaguely, it gave promise of opening into love.

Mrs. Waite was sitting up for her son as she had promised. When Potter and Hildegarde entered the room, she arose, surprised, but repressing her surprise.

"Mother," said Potter, "you know Garde, of course. We're going to be married to-night—here. That's why I asked you to sit up. I'll leave her with you while I run out to fetch a parson."

Hildegarde waited, looking at Mrs. Waite with reserve, expectancy. The older woman stepped forward and took

the girl in her arms as her own mother might have done. "My dear!" she said. Then: "Tell me about it, son."

Potter told all there was to tell, impulsively. His mother watched him tenderly, understandingly, as his face mirrored the emotions that moved within him. She sympathized with her son, loved her son. And she knew, as she watched him, that he loved this girl, that it was no mere fascination leading him headlong into ill-considered marriage.

"And you," she said, holding Hildegarde at arm's-length, "do you love my son?"

Hildegarde looked back into those sympathetic eyes and spoke honestly. "I—don't know," she said.

Mrs. Waite nodded. "No one knows you have carried her away?" she asked of Potter.

"No," he said. "Nobody in the house, anyhow."

"That is good. Perhaps she can get back as unseen as she came. Because, son, you must take her home again." She held up her hand as he would have protested with heat. "Listen, children: I will welcome you as a daughter, Garde," she said simply. "You will be very dear to me."

if you really want to
be my daughter when
you have had time to consider.

But you haven't. You're marrying Potter because there seems to be no other way out of it. That is bad, for him and for you. I hope you can come to love him as he loves you. But whether you love him or not, most of all if you do love him, you must go home. It never does to start wrong; you must start clean. Let us consider. I'm sure you wouldn't marry Potter until you know whether you love him."

"I'd do anything in order to get away from my father," Hildegarde declared passionately.

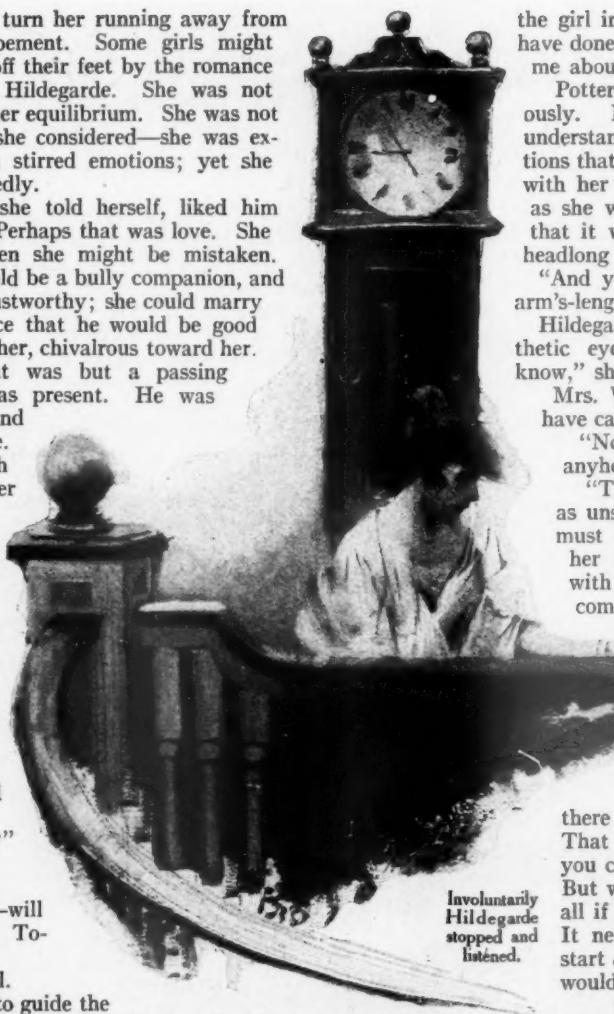
"Potter," said his mother, "you've been a wild boy, but you've always been honest with me—and tender with me. For all that has been said about you, I've never heard anyone say that you didn't play fair. People have always said that Potter Waite wasn't the man to cheat or to take advantage. You're not being a good sportsman now. You're cheating, cheating Garde, cheating yourself, cheating Mr. von Essen. If you married Garde in this way, it would be a story to follow her for years. It would be twisted, falsely told, garbled. You would both know bitter regret over it. And it isn't necessary. Hildegarde wants to leave her home. Well, let her leave it without the breath of scandal following. It will mean only a little patience, only a little waiting. Take her home, son; then go to-morrow to Mr. von Essen and ask his permission for your marriage."

"He would refuse," said Potter.

"If he does," said Mrs. Waite firmly, "you may bring Garde back to me whenever you are ready. But he must be given the chance. And most important of all, son, Garde must be given time to know her mind. To-night she doesn't love you. She has been honest enough to say so. I know that hurts, son. If she doesn't love you, you must give her a fair chance for happiness—you must win her. You're not being a sportsman, son."

"But Mother—"

"Would you marry a girl who doesn't love you?"



Involuntarily
Hildegarde
stopped and
listened.

He hesitated; he was unhappy, disturbed. "No," he said, "but—"

"But she doesn't know. Is it right to marry her before she knows?"

Potter looked at Hildegarde appealingly, but she dropped her eyes evasively. He understood. His mother was right, and Hildegarde interpreted rightly the deep breath which he drew.

"I sha'n't go home again. You sha'n't make me."

"You must, my dear," said Mrs. Waite. "There is no other place for you to go. You must see that you can't stay here. It is impossible for you to go anywhere else. It won't be for long, Garde, if you care—not if you love him. But you must go home to-night."

"I sha'n't. I'll never sleep under the same roof with Father again. Oh, you don't know everything; you don't know—" She could not finish. She stopped, too proud to beg, feeling her utter helplessness. There was no place to go if she could not stay here. She was beaten. Fiercely she turned from Mrs. Waite to Potter. "Come," she said furiously.

"Wont you kiss me good night, dear?" Mrs. Waite said gently.

Garde refused to reply, but flung out of the room, followed by Potter. She would not allow him to help her into the car, and sat in moody silence as he started the engine.

"You don't have to mind her," she said suddenly. "You're not tied to her apron-strings. If I'm willing to marry you, that's my affair. I sha'n't go home. We can go and be married some place."

"No," he said heavily. "Mother was right. If you loved me—"

She could not say it; even to purchase her freedom from the home she hated, she could not bring herself to declare a love she did not feel. Indeed, at the moment, she believed she hated Potter, hated his mother for her interference.

"You refuse to marry me?" she demanded.

"I'll come for you to-morrow. I'll ask your father for you, and if he won't give you to me, I'll break in and take you—if you love me."

"That's your final word?" Her voice was sharp, metallic.

He nodded miserably.

She did not speak again until they stood upon the piazza of her own house and she was about to open the door. Suddenly she turned on him, blazing with white fury. "You coward!" she said hoarsely. "You quitter—you contemptible quitter! Oh, how I despise you!"

It seemed as if she could not contain herself. Suddenly she lifted her little hand and struck him across the mouth; then, sobbing with rage, she snatched open the door and disappeared within.

Potter stood rigid, livid. For a minute, two minutes, he remained without motion; then slowly, very slowly, he turned away from the door and made his way to his motor.

CHAPTER XI

POTTER WAITE had been modified by his accident and by that period of enforced reflection which followed it; he was again modified by the occurrences of the night when he had first helped Hildegarde von Essen to escape from her home and then had compelled her to return to it. His first emotion had been one of seething rage; this was succeeded by a

bitter feeling that he had been cheated, and he brooded. He had been cheated because he had given his love to Hildegarde and had received in return for it a blow and her scorn. He did not stop to think. He did not consider that she was headstrong, impetuous as himself; he did not consider the suddenness, perhaps the untimeliness of the proffer of his love. He did not comprehend that Hildegarde's words and actions were the result of black disappointment, that her anger with him was to have been expected of a girl such as she, frustrated by him in a design which she believed to be vital. Instead of weighing and reflecting, he plunged into a sinister mood.

He threw himself into his work, not with gay enthusiasm, but with the smoldering fanaticism of a Savonarola. There could be no middle ground for him, no moderation. He had thought and dreamed airplanes before, because he loved the work, because he saw the value of the work and because he believed enthusiastically that his country required the work of him. Now he steeped himself in the atmosphere and technicalities of the airplane to crowd Hildegarde von Essen out of his thought.

He went to Washington, where the Signal Corps received him as a friend and gave him hours that were near to pleasantness. Major Craig gave up his time to Potter, encouraging him, inspiring him, congratulating him. From Washington, with imperative credentials, Potter visited such of the airplane factories as were worth while and studied what was in them to study. He was thrown into contact with an Englishman of the Royal Flying Corps, recovering from wounds received in air-battle with a German plane, and from this man of real experience he learned much of value regarding battle conditions, and what an airplane must be capable of. These matters consumed weeks, but the time expended returned its full measure of value.

When he came home again, the world was farther ahead by much with its grim business of war; the country itself was in a new stage of its transition, and unrest together with a growing realization of the duties and perils of the position of the United States was apparent in the minds of thinking men.

Detroit, however, rather sneered at the Seaboard for its nervousness. New York had the jumps, one was told. In New York people were really excited about the situation. Detroit laughed. Hundreds of miles lay between her and tidewater; she had no reason to sit up nights worrying about the arrival of a hostile fleet. She was safe, knew she was safe, and saw no reason why anybody else should worry. She was safe, and she was growing richer every time the hands circled the clock. New York was never going to bully or frighten Detroit into any war-hysteria.

Potter went to live at the new Detroit Athletic Club, that monument erected to Detroit's swiftly acquired wealth, for his family was away and the Grosse Pointe house was closed. Here at the club he encountered the best of Detroit's opinion, and the worst —saw the best of that spirit which was the marvel city of the continent, and the worst of the consequences of her tidal-wave of prosperity. Here about him was a curious blending of the conservatism and gentility of older Detroit,

"I'd love to be that watchman," said the man as he moved toward the door. "He'll wake up straddling a cloud."

with the new-rich, bombastic, squandering spirit of the day. He saw millionaires whose hands had not yet had time to free themselves of the callouses of toil in the machine-shop, betting fabulous sums on the rolling of the dice, at poker, at bridge—with opponents who boasted that their ancestors had owned land in Detroit since the coming of Cadillac.

Here and there, fortunately, were men of broader vision, of abiding patriotism. One great manufacturer was taking a salutary step in insisting that every employee in his mammoth shops should be an American citizen; one was purchasing space in the newspapers of the country to advertise, not automobiles, but preparedness. One man had the very stationery of his firm inscribed with words which not only showed the world where he stood, but urged the world to step forth and do likewise.

Whatever advances had been made toward presenting a solid front, toward coherent thought, were due not to something moving within, something spontaneous, some natural growth of patriotism, but to Germany. Germany was awakening America; Germany was America's alarm-clock. Her propaganda, her bomb-plots, her labor agitations, her arrogance and her submarines were doing for America what America seemed unable to do for herself. Germany, while willing quite another thing, was proving herself a friend to America; she was clumsy, bull-headed, forcing America to think together and to the point; she was compelling America to think about America. That way lay the path to patriotism.

TOM WATTS and O'Mera sat at table with Potter one evening.

"Potter," said Tom, "I'm beginning to think there's something to this rigmarole you've been talking. This deal at the Mexican border has shown us up bad. Something's got to be done. It got my goat, by Jove, that's what it did. And I'll tell you what I'm going to do—I'm going to Plattsburg this summer."

"You make me tired," O'Mera said. "Potter with his airplanes, and now you with your Plattsburg." He looked up and nodded across the room to Cantor. "Your snappy little friend is running around a lot with that man Cantor," he said to Potter.

"Who do you mean?"

"The von Essen girl. She wants to go easy with that boy—he plays marbles for keeps. Rides with him, dances with him, eats with him. None of my business, of course."

"It isn't," said Potter sharply.

O'Mera failed to notice, but launched into anecdotes of Cantor's adventures with various women, each adventure cited to demonstrate a certain cold-bloodedness in the dealings of the man with the other sex—and a degree of success with the other sex which Potter had not suspected. "It's his principal occupation," O'Mera said. "He has some other one, I guess, but I'm darned if I've ever figured it out. Handles money careless, too. Must clean up somehow."

Cantor merely appeared in the door of the main dining room, and after looking around, stepped back into the corridor. Watts drew back his chair.

"Let's go down and knock the balls around awhile," he suggested.

"Got a date," said O'Mera.

"Come on, Potter. I want to talk to you a bit."

Potter nodded and got to his feet. They walked between the tables to the door and out into the handsome hallway. Coming toward them from the elevator they saw Cantor

and a girl; he had evidently been waiting for her to come up from the ladies' quarters below. The girl was Hildegard von Essen.

Potter stiffened but did not pause. It was the first time they had met since she struck him in the face and flung herself into the house the night her flight was turned into a fiasco. She was unchanged; she was the same slender, daring, challenging, keen creature as before. Something she was saying compelled a laugh from Cantor. Then he saw Potter and smiled with surprise.

"Why, Waite, when did you get back?" he asked, and moved forward with hand outstretched. Potter was walking toward him; Hildegard's eyes were upon Potter; he could feel them, but did not return his look. He dared not. "I'm mighty glad to see you," Cantor said as Potter took his hand. "Dined? Miss von Essen and I are just going to have a bite. Won't you join us? I'm sure Miss von Essen seconds that." He turned toward her, and something in her look, her smiling, startled him. She had grown pale, but her eyes glinted savagely.

"Most certainly I do not," she said distinctly, and turned her back.

Cantor looked at Potter and lifted his brows. There was the merest hint of a smile, a sardonic smile. "What's up?" he asked under his breath. "See you later, then."

Potter walked downstairs in grim silence, his two friends eying him wonderingly, neither caring to speak. The Potter Waite they knew was accustomed in such circumstances to prove unpleasant. "So long," O'Mera said hastily at the foot of the stairs, and disappeared toward the coat-room.

"Guess I won't play billiards," Potter said slowly to Watts. There was no other word. He turned abruptly away, and Tom gazed after him wondering what it was all about. "Huh!" he ejaculated. "What in thunder?"

Upstairs Cantor was equally nonplussed. Hildegard walked to their table, drew back her chair and was about to sit down. Then she pushed the chair away from her passionately.

"I don't want to eat," she said. "I'm going home."

"But Miss von Essen—?"

"I'm going home, and I'm going alone. I'm going now."

"What is it? What have I done to offend—?"

"Nothing," she said ungraciously and began to walk toward the door. He followed her.

"I said I was going alone," she said under her breath.

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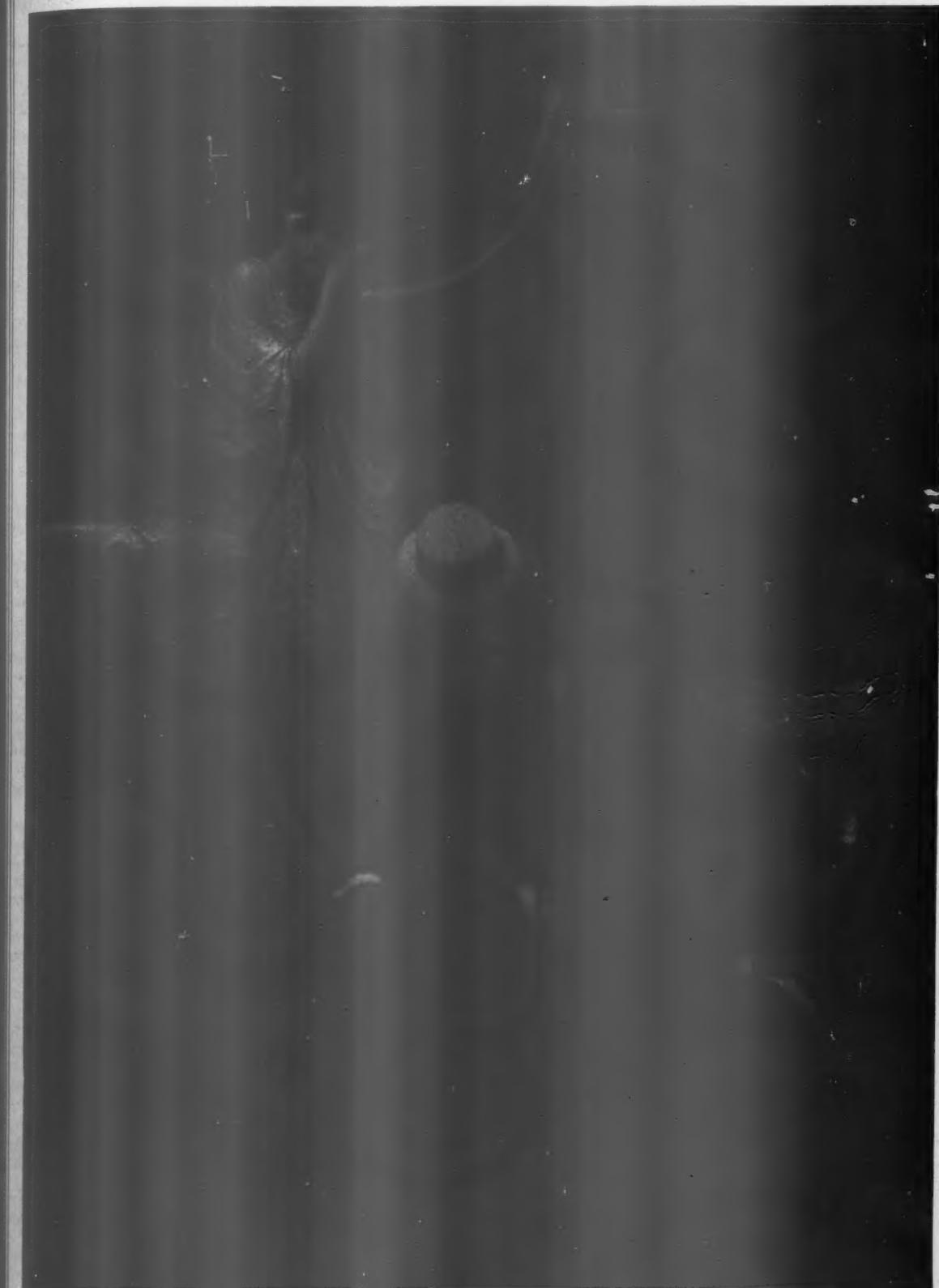
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Hildegarde followed them into the house. As the man entered the hall, he stumbled, cried out breathlessly and slumped forward in a faint. Cantor and Hildegarde bent over him.

"But—"

She faced him suddenly, flamed out at him. "Go away," she said. "Have I got to shout at you? I don't want you. I don't want anybody. I'm going home."

"I will see you to your car," he said. "Careful! People are looking at us."

She walked rapidly to the elevator; it was as though she tried to run away from him, but he followed closely.

"Miss von Essen's car," Cantor said to the door-man.

She stepped into the car and flung herself upon the seat. "Home," she said, but did not look at Cantor. He shrouded his shoulders and closed the door.

He did not go again to the table that had been prepared for himself and Hildegard, but entered the grill, where he selected a table in a distant corner.

"She's in love with him," he said to himself with the air of a man making a mathematical calculation. "Um! All the better! Something may be made of it."

CHAPTER XII

FOR weeks after Hildegard's brief encounter with Potter outside the dining-room of the Athletic Club he insisted upon obtruding himself into her thoughts and multiplying her perplexities. She herself, if she had been given to introspection, could not have told what were her sentiments toward him. She was very angry with him; that persisted. But the meeting of him had given her a shock she did not suspect it would give her; it had upset her. After she declined so sharply to sit at table with him, it had seemed to her she had to get away from that spot, had to be alone, could not bear the presence of a human being. She did not want to hide away to think about him; that was the thing she least desired to do. She would have told you she never wanted to see him or be reminded of him again.

She had accepted Cantor's attentions because, with a sort of childish petulance, she imagined it would hurt Potter. Her reason was a double one, perhaps a triple one. Potter was the first consideration; then, second in importance, she must get away from the house, be away from it frequently, be amused, excited. Cantor offered amusement and excitement. She was not so inexperienced that she failed to perceive early in their intimacy that Cantor was not the safest of escorts, that he might, perhaps, prove to be more exciting than amusing, and more dangerous than either. That feature of it rather egged her on. In her state of mind she courted the risks she saw, and dared them. It provided the element of contest her restlessness demanded. She took on Cantor as she would have taken on a game of chess, knowing, or suspecting, the chances of winning or losing. And she found him fascinating, a skilled cavalier, a delightful companion—but a watchful, ready companion, not likely to pass over the opportunities of the game. It required all her wit, her ready impertinence, to hold the man at arm's-length.

On the Fourth of July she drove with Cantor to the Bloomfield Hills Country Club, adjacent to the beautiful little lakes of Oakland County, distant some twenty-odd miles from Detroit. There they lunched and dined and played golf. In the evening there were to be dancing and fireworks, but a sudden mood seized Hildegard before the evening's entertainment was well begun, to go home. She could not account for it herself. Simply she wanted to go home, and wanting to go, she insisted upon being taken. Cantor discovered that there was no arguing with her.

As they approached the Boulevard, she became conscious of a tremendous glow in the sky toward the west, a glow that seemed to rise, to pulsate, to bound and leap fitfully. Cantor saw it too, and slackened speed. His lips were drawn; every now and then he moistened them with his tongue, and his eyes glowed with repressed excitement.

"It's a fire," said Hildegard with interest awakened. There was something about a big fire that fitted into her mood. "Let's drive across the Boulevard and see."

"We'll only get into a mob," he protested.

"Never mind. We'll take that chance."

"But, Miss von Essen, we may get shut off there and held up for hours."

"You needn't worry if I don't," she said sharply.

Cantor appeared more unwilling to obey her than a man's fear of delay could easily account for. One might have said that the region of the fire was one he very obviously wished to avoid, but he obeyed nevertheless.

As they drew nearer and were able to guess at the locality of the fire, Hildegard said under her breath: "The Waite Motor Company—it is about there. Can the be it?"

"I don't imagine so," Cantor said tensely. "Their buildings are fireproof, I've heard."

"But it is," Hildegard insisted. "I'm sure it is. Hurry It will be a tremendous fire. I want to see it."

They turned and turned again. Before them lay the great mass of the Waite Motor Company's plant, silhouetted against an eye-blasting inferno of roaring flame. The fire seemed not to be in the motor plant, but to the rear of it.

"It seems to be a lot of sheds and things," Hildegard said. Then, speaking to a police officer, she asked what was burning.

"Temporary buildings of the motor company," he said. "They were put up this spring as warehouses. They tell me they were filled with motor-trucks for the Allies, hundreds of 'em—and with parts and supplies."

"Fireworks started it, I suppose," said Cantor harshly.

"I don't know. Maybe so, but there's a heap of things happening lately that fireworks haint got anythin' to do with. Them Germans—"

"Nonsense!" said Cantor vehemently.

"It isn't nonsense," Hildegard said sharply. "They could lay it on the fireworks. That's why they did it to-day. I—" She stopped short and bit her lip.

An ambulance came, forcing its way through the crowd to be stopped close beside Hildegard and Cantor.

"Oh," she said, "some one's hurt. See who it is. Please do." She turned to the policeman: "Wont you ask who is hurt, please?"

The officer was obliging. He made his way to the ambulance, assisted in making a path for it to proceed and then returned to the car.

"One of the watchmen," he said. "Ambulance doctor says he was knocked on the head—hurt bad. Says it looks like somebody hit him a nasty lick. Skull's cracked."

Hildegard shuddered. "Murder too!" she whispered. Then: "Let's go home."

They drove southward to Jefferson Avenue and eastward to the von Essen residence. A car preceded them through the entrance and into the grounds. Hildegard watched it, wondered who it could be. It stopped just before them, and a man stepped out; he wavered, staggered, stumbled to the ground, and Hildegard heard him cry out with pain.

She leaped from Cantor's car and ran to the man's side.

"Who is it?" she asked breathlessly. "What is it? What's the matter?"

The man struggled to his feet, holding one hand with the other, and answered through his teeth, as one speaks who suffers agony:

"It's Philip, the chauffeur, Miss von Essen. Playing with fireworks and got burned, pretty bad." He breathed sharply.

"Come into the house, quickly," she said. "Mr. Cantor take his arm; help him in." As Cantor appeared, the man started. "Steady!" Cantor told him. "Steady!"

Hildegard followed them into the house. She was frightened, and she was doubtful. (Continued on page 150)

A TENSE, swift-moving drama such as Albert Payson Terhune knows so well how to write—the sort of story, in fact, that seems not to have been written, but actually to have happened.



D R I F T W O O D

By ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE

THE wet feet began it. Up to that time life had always gone Rance Doulton's way.

He had won, at thirty, an enviable name as a fiction-writer. He had also won the heart of Phyllis Carey—which meant far more to him. He was making a good living with his pen. Already his reputation had spread far eastward from his California home. The book on which he was working was quite the most pretentious bit of writing he had done; he had golden hopes for it.

And then he had nothing better to do than to get his feet wet.

Now, like most other people, Rance Doulton had gotten his feet wet several thousand times with no ill results at all, except to his shoe-leather. More than once he had fallen through the ice on a skating or hunting trip in the mountains, had let the bitter north wind dry the clothes on his back—and he had not taken even the mildest cold from such exposure.

Thus it was a rank absurdity that a chance step into a puddle on Kearney Street should have given Rance a right virulent case of gripe. But that is what happened.

Rance was sick in bed for more than a week. Then he got up, against the doctor's orders, and sat in his draughty study for five hours, writing at his book. Next day he was in bed again. Twice more, during the weeks that followed, he transgressed the doctor's commands and got up

Illustrated by
WILLIAM OBERHARDT

to work on his book. And two relapses followed.

By the time Rance Doulton was fit to be out of doors again the doctor very peremptorily told him to go up into the pine country—far above the San Francisco fogs—for at least a month. Instead, Rance locked himself in his study every day, toiling over his book from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon. And during this time he added to the room's bad ventilation by smoking many cigarettes.

Work over, for the day, he would at once hurry off to Phyllis Carey's house. And what with theater or opera or dance, or quietly rapturous home-evening with Phyllis, he seldom got to bed before one A. M.

This sort of thing does little harm to a well man, especially if he be young. But Rance Doulton was not a well man. On the day he mailed his completed book-manuscript to the publishers he tumbled over in a dead faint on the post-office floor in front of the registry window. When he came to himself, with the usual crowd around him, there was a froth of blood on his lips and a queer little icy, fiery tingling at the base of one lung.

Rance scrambled to his feet, gruffly declining help, and insisted on going home alone. But he was scared. He was scared as never before in all his thirty years. The flecks of blood on his lips scared him worst. Also he felt horribly ashamed that he—a grown man, a former track-athlete and boxer—should have been so abject as to faint.

Next day he went to his doctor with the story of his collapse. The medico thumped his chest and listened to his breathing and asked questions. Then he gave his verdict. Rance, in a gust of babyish rage, called him a liar—and was promptly ordered out of the office, the doctor adding fiercely:

"I'd throw any other man out, bodily, who insulted me like that. But I can't soil my hands by thrashing a consumptive."

RANCE went home and lay awake all night. He couldn't bear to call on Phyllis Carey that evening, although his frightened heart cried out, like that of a sick child to its mother, for her loving sympathy and for the tender words that should calm his fears. He could not bring himself to tell Phyllis about it—not yet, anyhow, not until some other and wiser doctor should have a chance to examine him. It would not be fair to frighten her when after all, the old fool who had inspected him might be all wrong in the diagnosis.

Yet four miserable weeks passed before Rance could summon courage to go to another doctor. He wondered, dully, at his own cowardice—he to whom fear had always been a stranger.

On the morning of the twenty-eighth day he received a letter from the New York publishers to whom he had sent his book. The publishers accepted it, and on very liberal terms (for publishers—and for a young author's first book); and they inclosed a duplicate contract.

Rance signed and mailed back one of the duplicates. Then he telephoned to Phyllis Carey and told her the good news. And after that he took advantage of his elation, to force himself into going to see one of the most famous throat-and-lungs specialists in California.

Two hours later he called on Phyllis Carey. The girl had been much worried of late by his thinness and his haggard face. Always he had laughed off her fears, telling her the grippe had knocked him hard and that he would be all right again as soon as he should be free from the terrific brain-and-nerve strain of finishing his book. But to-day there was nothing to laugh off.

Nor was there now a trace of fright in his heart. No longer hoping, he could no longer fear. He was dead white, save for two flaring splashes of color on his cheekbones, where consumption was flaunting its hideous "No Surrender!" signals. But his eye was steady and his mouth was firm. So was his voice, as he answered the girl's frightened query, at sight of her lover.

"Listen, dear," said Rance, "I've something to tell you—something that has to be told. And I want you to take it bravely, as I am trying, hard, to take it. I wish I could spare you the telling. But—"

"Oh, what is it?" she cried, frightened. "What is it, Rance? What is the matter? What has happened? You look so—so!"

"It's best to tell it brutally," he said. "I have tuberculosis. I'm pretty far gone with it. Two doctors say so. Aronson is the best man in California for that sort of thing." He hurried on, forestalling her horrified interruption: "I've just come from him. He was frank in saying I have just about one chance in fifteen. He says the best thing for me to do is to take a long voyage in a sailing-ship—preferably through the South Seas. But he doesn't hold out much hope, even of that. Still, it's a chance. And I'm going to take it."

He paused. But she had made no further attempt to break in on his recital; nor even now did she speak. Her great blue eyes, dark with dread, were fixed on his face. Her lips were gray.

"I've come straight to you," went on Rance bravely, "because it was your right to be the first to know it, because—well, you see, I—I can't hold you to our engagement, the way things are now. It's only fair to release

you. If ever I come back, and come back cured— But I don't dare let myself figure on that. Meantime you aren't bound to me in any way. I couldn't let our engagement go on, even if you wanted it to."

He needed all his courage to speak as he was speaking. He foresaw that the loving girl would indignantly refuse to accept her release, and that she would cling to him to the very last. But he felt he had no right to let her do so, and he braced himself to stand firm in his self-sacrifice. Oh, but it was bitterly hard for him! He worshiped her, but he knew it would be doubly hard for her. And he prayed for strength to resist her pleas.

But no such pleas were voiced. Phyllis Carey was still staring at him, dumbly, as if in a trance of dismay. Her pretty face was blank, but the agile brain behind it was racing. She was extremely young; she was abominably spoiled. Nothing had ever come into her butterfly life to develop or strengthen her or to bring out her best. Rich in her own right, the child of doting parents, she had been brought up in precisely the wrong way to meet such a crisis as this.

It was Rance Doulton's splendid vitality and athletic body that first had attracted her to him, a year earlier. Now his vitality was gone, replaced by a feverish energy that seemed to prey on what little life remained in his emaciated body. He scarce had the strength to walk or to hold himself upright. And the Norse-god beauty was wholly stricken from his shrunken face.

Tuberculosis!

One of the few ghastly and shuddering memories in Phyllis' sheltered life was of a time when she had reluctantly gone with her mother on a charity-visit to the Home for Tubercular Incurables, near Berkeley. The gruesome recollection of the sights there had robbed Phyllis of sleep and of appetite for weeks afterward. She could never think of that visit, even nowadays, without a throb of physical nausea.

Yet Rance Doulton, the man she loved, the man she had loved, was about to become like one of the human nightmares whose aspect had so sickened her! With a violent start she recovered herself. She had made up her mind to the only course possible. And it was not a cruel course, either, she told herself. Had not he himself just insisted on her doing that very thing? So she spoke.

"It is awful," she said brokenly, "perfectly terrible! I would gladly give my own life, if I could make you well again, darling. You know that."

"I thank God you can't!" he cried, touched to the heart by her tender words.

"But," she continued, "you are right; I see that—even though it breaks my heart to say so. You are right. I would not be fair, to either of us, to keep on being engaged. It is splendid of you not to want to bind me to such a sorrow as that. And after all, I couldn't do you any good by being engaged to you. You'll be away, you see—and—and—"

"Yes," he said gently, his heart dead. "I see. Good-by."

He bent down and kissed her. Then, before she could speak, he turned sharply on his heel and left the room. A mirror hung beside the door. In it he could see Phyllis furtively wipe with her handkerchief the soft lips that had just been pressed by his farewell kiss.

She said something, but Rance did not hear. Half blinded, wholly heart-crushed, he was making his way out of the house.

A BLOCK farther on, Rance met Joe Haddock, who had been his roommate at Stanford and who was still his closest chum. Joe was in wholesale hardware—had not one taste in common with his chum, and had never even read one of the latter's stories. He did not like Phyllis Carey, although Rance had tried to make the two less antagonistic than their few meetings had rendered.

them. Yet now, because he was more unhappy than ever before, Rance told Joe Haddock the entire wretched story, from first to last. Joe said little; and most of that little was luridly blasphemous—as is the way of some men, when they would like to cry but don't know how.

Rance mechanically set about the preparations for his sea-trip. Not that he wanted to make the trip or to prolong his broken life by one short hour, but because Joe Haddock loudly called him a yellow coward when he voiced this reluctance, and a little because he himself was morbidly anxious to chew longer the bitter cud

of disillusion and to remember the gross worthlessness of the woman he had once deemed divine.

fore he lied like a white man when Joe Haddock asked about the state of his bank-balance.

Yet for such a trip as Rance was planning money is necessary. Rance took account of stock. He pawned or sold such of his possessions as were of any value except to himself and paid all his debts; and with nearly the entire remaining sum he bought passage on the copra-schooner *Aloha*, which was to sail in one week for Tahiti. Rance's money would carry him only as far as Tahiti, but this did not trouble him. He calculated that by the time he should reach the South Seas he would either be dead or else would be strong enough to pay his way for the rest of the trip by working before the mast. While this was gallant philosophy, it was at the same time uncommonly bad common sense. . . .

It was a matter of months before anyone in America heard from the wanderer. Then Joe Haddock received the following letter from him, scribbled in lead-pencil on sleazy sheets of wrapping paper:

"Papeete, Tahiti Island,
February 17, 19—

"Dear old Joe: No, I'm not dead. But this is the first time I've been sure enough of that fact to write a letter. Till now I've always been afraid my ghost might get to San Francisco ahead of it. Though

there was no use in telling you so, at the time, I was almost flat broke when

I left the States. When my passage was paid to Tahiti, I had just two dollars and seventy-five cents left in my pocket. I can say this now, because I don't need any money. When I do, I'll borrow it from you."

At this point Joe Haddock slammed down the letter, addressed his Creator in sulphurous monologue, then went out and bought ten fifty-dollar express money-orders and mailed them to Rance, in care of the United States consul at Tahiti, along with a peppery note of shrewish rebuke. That was

Haddock's way. Then he returned to the letter.

"On the sail to Papeete I went all to pieces. I grew worse instead of better. Once I caught the captain privately studying up a Book of Regulations he luggered out of his chest. He had it open at a page marked 'Burials at Sea.' Cheery, wasn't it?

"When we docked at Papeete (that's the town here), I tried to get passage for the Marquesas—as far as Nuku-hiva, anyhow, so that I could explore the Typee Valley if I got strong enough. But not a trader would take me along. They were all afraid I'd die on their hands. And the captain who brought me to Tahiti wouldn't take me back to the States without passage-money in advance. I don't blame him, for that page of regulations on burials at sea is pretty complicated in spots.



Oberhauer

"Mr. Haddock," she said breathlessly.
"I've tried so hard to find you! Do you happen to know anything about Rance Doulton?"

As usual, in the big things of life, Money butted its greasy way upon the sorry scene—or rather, the lack of money. Rance Doulton had always lived well. Since he had begun work on his book, he had earned no ready cash by his pen. He had had to keep going, on what money he chanced to have in bank. The expenses of his long illness had melted most of this. Consequently, he suddenly found himself almost penniless.

The publishers had thrifitly omitted to say anything about advance royalties on his book, and he had asked for none. He dared not borrow money, for he knew there was little chance of his living to return the loan. Where-



Behind an overturned boat crouched a native girl. She had been watching the white ship sink on the sky-line. She was weeping bitterly.

to one side. She took me into the hut and laid me on a raised mat-bed. Then I must have fainted again.

"For three solid weeks that girl nursed me, day and night, while my tired-out body coquetted with death. But she pulled me through. She's a wonder. In a month I could move around a little. In two months I could feel the strength creeping back. And now—well, at the end of six months I'm on the Right Road. I'm getting well, Joe!

"Do you hear that? I'm getting well! That's no idle fancy, either, but *feel* it. Another six months will see me as fit as a fiddle. I never felt so

strong and

vigorous and alive, in all my days. Of course I'm going easy yet; but the lung has healed. I *feel* it has.

"I told you I was nursed to health in a native hut. Well, I'm still there. In brief, I've turned native. Don't be too much disgusted, till you hear the rest! Yes, I've turned native.

If I hadn't done that, I'd have turned corpse long before this time.

"My own chilly country pushed me out—a wreck. The woman I'd have died for (the woman I'd still blithely die for, God help me!) gave me up and shrank away from me in disgust. The tropics have welcomed me in their warm and life-giving arms, and they have made me a well man. A native girl, to whom I was a stranger, took me up when Phyllis flung me from her. And she saved my life. She loves me; my consumption did not make her shudder, as Phyllis shuddered. It made her resolve to care for me and to cure me.

"Her name is Kalani—at least, that is as near to its pronunciation as our alphabet can get. The hut and its mangoes and breadfruit and coconut trees belong to her. They belonged to her parents. But both her father and mother died of smallpox two months before I came here. From then, until she met me, Kalani lived here alone. Her mother was once a nursemaid at the Consulate, and Kalani speaks a tolerable English—sketchy, but understandable.

"She brought me back from death's door, with no hope of reward. And as soon as I could talk, I explained to her how poor I am. But it made no difference. I was a man whom her gods had dropped at her feet, and whose smashed and fluttering life they had permitted her to make whole. That was enough for her.

"Yes, and it is enough for me. I am making the only reward in my poor power. I am living here, as natives live, and I am trying to forget—though in the latter effort I am making little enough progress, thus far!

"I am paying my way—yes, and more than paying it. For example, these natives have the most absurdly primitive ideas of farming. I took the agricultural course, you remember, at Stanford, along with the regular college routine. And I've been able to do wonders with Kalani's little farm. And by pruning and so forth I've nearly doubled the yield of the breadfruit and mangoes.

"She has a boat, and I go fishing, for market, twice a week in it. I can get twice as big prices for the fish and

"So here I was, stranded. I applied for a room at the hotel in Papeete. The clerk took one look at me and said they were 'full up.' I found the manager. He was less brusque, but he wanted a week's money in advance—which left me just as badly off as before.

"I went out for a stroll along the beach, though every step was as hard as lifting a thousand-pound weight. I felt mighty rotten, not only in body but in mind too. I'd read of people being 'on the beach.' That's the phrase, down here, for being down and out. Well, I was literally 'on the beach.'

"I wandered on for a mile or so, panting as if I was running a Marathon. Then the sun began to blister me, and I turned into the jungle. A little path twisted back from the beach, through the snarl of trees and vines and creepers. I tottered along this, feeling worse and worse all the time. Presently the ground lifted itself up to meet me, and it hit me in the face. I could taste the blood in my mouth. That's the last thing I knew. Then I went to sleep.

"A century or so later I woke up. I was still lying there in the jungle trail, but I had been turned over on my back, and a girl was kneeling beside me, dousing my head with water from a coconut-shell.

"She was a native, and she was pretty, as natives go,—and she was working like a slave to get the life back into my worthless carcass. By and by, when I was a bit stronger, she half lifted me to my feet. She put one of my arms around her shoulders and one of hers around my waist, and she trundled me along, like that, bearing nearly all my weight. She took me to the end of the trail, a furlong or so ahead, stopping every now and then to let me get my breath.

"After a while we came out into a little clearing, with a native hut in its center, and a grove of mangoes and breadfruit-trees behind it, and a bunch of coconut-palms

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vegetables we sell at Papeete as she was able to. And I've picked up a few dollars in curio-trade with tourists. Kalani carves beautifully on wood and shell. She learned it from her father. I get whacking good pay for her curios whenever a ship touches at Papeete.

"Shall I ever go back to civilization? Frankly, I don't know. Why should I go back to the hustle and sickness and trickery and artificiality of it all? Here I am gloriously well. I am busy, too, though in a beautiful and lazy and primeval way. I sleep on a mat; I bathe in stream and sea; I eat simple foods; I am loved and tenderly looked after. Is there so much worth while in the roaring outer world that I should desert my Lotus Land for it?

"Time will tell. In the meantime I float lazily and gratefully with the current—the drowsy, warm current.

Despise me if you like. Down here the applause or the hissing of the real world is very faint and hard to hear. Nothing matters much.

"If I could kill one gnawing ache in my heart, I should be divinely happy, instead of just bovinely content. You know well enough what that ache is, old man. It will die only when I die. If I had never met Phyllis, or even if I could forget that look of loathing in her wonderful eyes—and how she wiped away my good-by kiss!

"But there is no use lying to myself—no use in pretending I don't love her above all in the world and heaven too. And since I've had time to think, I am less uncharitable over the way she treated me. She is so young, so undeveloped! It was like expecting a yearling thoroughbred colt to draw a ton load, to expect her to stand such a shock as the news of my malady. She was *not* to blame. Under the



"It is awful!" she said brokenly. "I would gladly give my own life if I could make you well again, darling. You know that." "I thank God you can't!" he cried, touched to the heart.

veneer of spoiled-child selfishness she is pure gold. I should write and tell her so, if it were not that it is kinder to let her forget me.

"As to Kalani—I have no apologies to make. You will understand. Any normal man will understand, and sympathize. Even a woman, unless she judged me with the awful merciless Justice of the Pure, would not condemn me, if she knew all the facts.

"Kalani rescued me. I am making the only payment in my power. I was a spar of human driftwood. She lifted me from the waters and fashioned me into something worth while, after a civilized woman had cast me away with abhorrence. I do not love Kalani. I can never love anyone again, I think. But I make her very happy. And I surely owe it to her. Let it go at that.

"I am scribbling this, swinging in a grass hammock, between two breadfruit trees. The shade is sweet, and a breath of the trade winds is fanning me. From out on the reef I can hear the sleepy boom of the surf. I am barefoot. I'm wearing only a fiber shirt and a pair of disreputable duck trousers. Behind my right ear dangles a *tiare* flower. Kalani fastens a fresh flower there every morning, and she makes *lei*—wreaths—for my thick neck. She loves to decorate me like an idol.

"She herself is sitting cross-legged on the grass at my feet, busily chipping one end from a big green coconut. Presently she will offer me this nature-made cup, abrim with the delicious coconut-juice I like so well.

"When this letter is done, in another five minutes, the sun will have dipped below the mango-tops. Then it will be time for our evening swim. After that we will run back to the hut together, hand in hand, laughing like two kids, and sit down to our supper of fish and *poi* and fried breadfruit, with a calabashful of coconut-juice by way of beverage. Then, on our mats, we'll stretch ourselves out to sleep under God's white stars. Have you, up in foggy San Francisco, a pleasanter evening to look forward to?

"Don't bother to answer this scrawl. I promised I'd let you know how I fared, and I have kept my word. Perhaps I may write again some day, perhaps not. In either case you may know it is well with me, here in my Lotus Land."

THAT same night, Joe Haddock sent a brief letter to Rance. He wrote:

"You are right. It is well with you in your Lotus Land. The fog, here, this evening, is like iced bean soup. I had a big dinner at the Morvens' and I am suffering from an inferno of dyspepsia. I nearly got run over, twice, to-day, by motorcars. And yesterday my watch was lifted while I stood in line at a box-office. You're luckier where you are.

"As to Kalani—neither do I condemn thee. I've heard little of Miss Carey since you went away, for I've been East on business until last week. I heard, though, on good authority, that she proceeded to forget you in a highly pyrotechnic fashion by plunging into no less than three violently spectacular flirtations within a month after you left. 'Pure gold,' is she? Stick to Kalani, chucklehead!

"I don't need to tell you how tickled I am at your cure. You'll cheat the devil yet. Maybe I'll run down to Tahiti sometime for a hand-shake and for a swig of coconut-juice. So long, Lotus Eater!"

What Haddock had written of Phyllis Carey was entirely true. But oddly enough, so was what Rance had written of her. Her first revulsion of feeling, on Rance's departure, was followed by a babyish feeling of resentment against him for the unhappiness that bit into the very depths of her heart. To gratify this, and to blot Rance's unwelcome image from her memory, she flirted desperately. But to her amazement she found this only redoubled her longing for Rance. Compared to him all men seemed to her as smirking, gabbling puppets. She could not forget. And week by week her unhappiness grew more and more intense.

It was a trial by fire, this long period of acute misery, and it seared away much of her surface selfishness. It taught her to read her heart aright, to realize that she was a one-man woman, and that Rance Doulton was the One Man.

She grew to hate herself for her treatment of him. Night after night she lay awake sobbing for him in the darkness—stretching out her empty arms in an agony of supplication for his pardon and for his love. Again and again she wrote to him, at his rooms and at his club. Always her letters came back stamped: *"Not Found."*

Then she began to ask questions of his friends, at first in a careless roundabout way, then with open eagerness. No one knew where he had gone. Several times she called at Joe Haddock's office, only to be told Haddock was out of town. She wrote to Joe. He did not reply.

At last she gave up the hopeless quest and settled down to quiet heartache. Rance was gone; she had lost him forever. Perhaps by now he was dead. And a word from her, at the first, would have given her the bliss of marrying him and of nursing him to the very end!

PERHAPS two months after Haddock received Rance's letter he chanced to meet Phyllis on the street. With a curt bow Joe was hurrying past, but the girl barred his way.

"Mr. Haddock," she said breathlessly, "I've tried so hard to find you! Do you happen to know anything about Rance Doulton? Anything at all?"

The stark appeal in her uplifted face did not at all move Haddock. Curtly but studiously he made answer to the girl who had so ill-treated his adored chum.

"Why, the last I heard of Rance," said he, "he was starving to death on the beach down at Tahiti. It was an even break whether starvation or consumption would get him first."

Again lifting his hat, he turned and made off at his fastest walk. Nor did he turn back to note the horror in Phyllis' eyes, or the ashen tint of her cheeks as she stood there staring mutely after him.

Three days later Phyllis, accompanied only by her mother, boarded the earliest steamship leaving San Francisco for Tahiti.

Arrived at Papeete, and leaving her mother to look after the luggage and engage rooms at the hotel, Phyllis went straight to the office of the United States consul. From that wondering official she learned that a man named Doulton lived in a native hut some two miles southward, and not far off the beach. Waiting only to get brief directions as to the route, Phyllis set forth on foot in search of her lover.

The hour was early. The air was still cool and bracing. Faint and trembling with suspense, Phyllis half ran along the white beach in the direction the consul had pointed out. Now that she was so near the goal of her quest, her heart beat hammeringly, and her limbs shook. But she hastened onward, looking neither to left nor right. She passed a few curiously staring natives with empty fish-baskets on their heads. A sailor or two grinned propitiously at the pretty girl. But she kept on, noting none of these.

A mile or so below the town, her way along the water-edge was barred. A fisherman was launching a long and shallow native boat directly in her path. Mechanically the girl paused until the boat should be pushed out of her way and into the water. Then it was that her eyes rested on the fisherman himself.

Barefooted and bareheaded he was, and clad only in sleeveless shirt and torn trousers. A gaudy flower was stuck behind one of his ears, native-fashion. But he assuredly was no native, this rugged, yellow-haired giant with the brown-tanned arms and neck. Just then he turned around and she saw his face. (Continued on page 155)

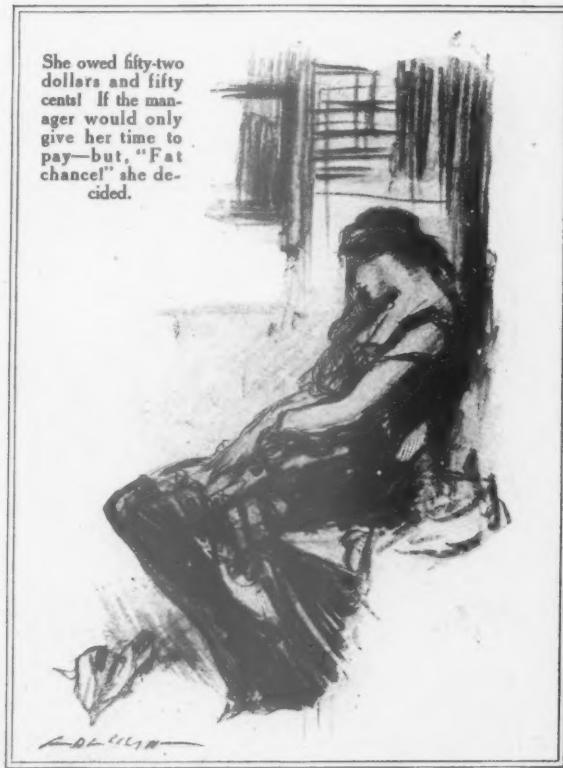
NORA is a darlin'; and when she flees the bargain basement for a week of high life, and finds that a little sincerity is a dangerous thing, you'll fall in love with her just as Norton did.

The FINAL CLOSE-UP

By ROYAL
BROWN

Illustrated by
HENRY RALEIGH

She owed fifty-two dollars and fifty cents! If the manager would only give her time to pay—but, "Fat chance!" she decided.



ENVIRONMENT was Nora Nolan's excuse. If you had told her so, however, she would have advised you to forget it. And if she had smiled as she said it, you would have forgotten it. Nora was eighteen and, as such things are reckoned, rather more than passably pretty. Whatever her own sex might say of her deplorable actions, it is quite certain that no man would be the first to cast a stony glance at Nora.

Nora's first mistake was the common one. She had been born of poor and presumably honest parents—honesty being a luxury only the rich can afford. Had her father's pick struck gold instead of dynamite (this happened when Nora was four), she would have been quite different at eighteen—or if her mother had lived, instead of dying when Nora was twelve.

The hope that Mrs. Nolan had pinned on high Heaven, in passing, was: "There'll be no washing there."

The result, in so far as Nora was concerned, was that at eighteen she found herself sentenced to hard labor. She did not know how long she was in for, but on the tenth of July, when the mercury reached its highest mark and her spirits their lowest ebb, she had a feeling it was for life.

"Dante's Inferno," she observed to Eight Forty-three, "had nothing on this."

"This" referred to the lowermost of the two subterranean chambers known as Featherman's Bargain Basement. The fact that Nora was acquainted with the immortal "Inferno" need cause no conjecture. She had seen it in the movies, wherein the seventh depth was vividly pictured with the unfortunate immigrants standing neck-high in boiling lava and suffering a torture which they strove to alleviate by gnawing each others' heads.

Say what you will, the movies are educational.

The very hot tenth of July fell on a Friday. As the day and the heat waxed, Nora's lips met more firmly than Nature had ever intended. The knot in which she gathered her hair—there was a lot of it, black Irish hair to match her blue Irish eyes—became an insufferable burden.

"Maizie Smith fainted," gasped Eight Forty-three, with awe-rounded eyes.

"She's lucky," observed Nora with uncharacteristic lack of sympathy.

A dark wisp of hair escaped and formed a moist curl on her forehead. She pushed it back with uncertain fingers. She wondered if the chocolate college ice she had eaten instead of lunch was disagreeing with her. She felt very queer. A table heaped high with waists bowed to her, with dignity. Nora blinked rapidly to clear her vision and then looked again.

This time she saw not the table but a young man, who was all dressed in white, like an angel (or a white-wing). His head seemed to bob around like a cork.

"Crazy with the heat," murmured Nora, referring to herself.

The young man smiled at her and reaching into his pocket, drew forth a thermometer.

"One hundred and—why, great Scott!" he exploded. "Do you know this is the hottest place in the city?"

Now there are some sixty-odd questions a prospective customer may spring upon a salesgirl. The perfect salesgirl knows them all. So did Nora. This was not among them, however. It didn't make any difference, anyway. Nora had them and she knew it.

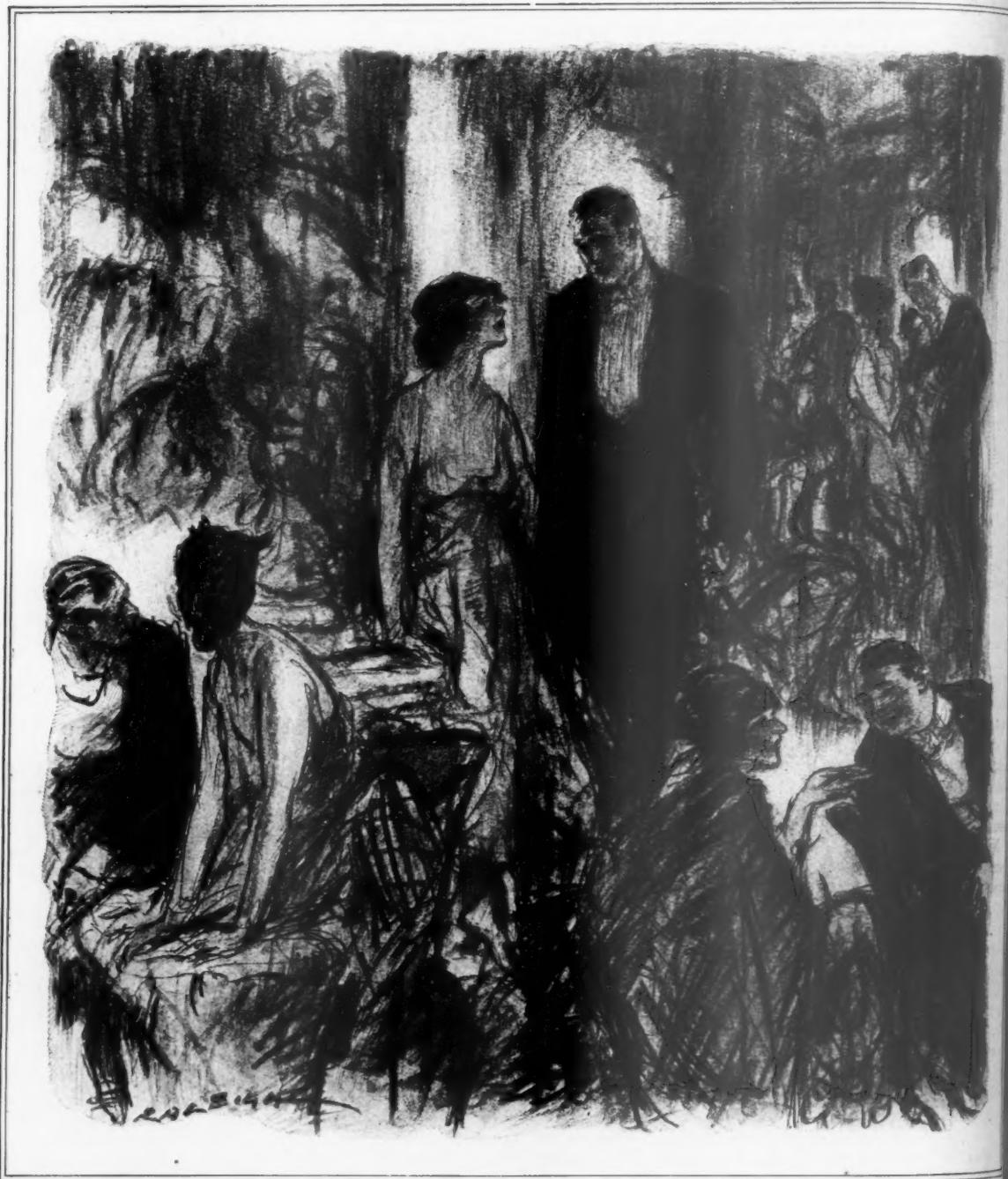
"Here—goes—nothing," she observed, and then she did something she had never done before.

When she came to, she was on a cot in the emergency room. She opened her eyes warily. There was a man there, and he was in white, but he was the store doctor, and his thermometer was a clinical one.

"Shut your eyes and keep still," he commanded.

Nora did so. The young man with a thermometer was a dream, like the one Maizie Smith swore she had when she took gas. Maizie went up and up, and suddenly she saw an angel. ("Sure it wasn't an aviator?" Nora had suggested.) And just as he was going to kiss her, she—woke up.

"Tough luck," Nora had consoled her. "Me for gas."



After they had retreated to the veranda-rail, Nora said suddenly: "They're on to me, I guess. I heard your friend Emily say something about a basement. That's me."

Later the "super" came up from the basement to see how she was. He stopped for a word with the doctor, a pessimist by profession.

"I guess I can fix that all right," said the super when the doctor was done. "We'll give her her vacation now."

To Nora he said, with the utmost cheeriness: "Just get rested and come back all tanned up and full of pep."

"Fine for the lilies," thought Nora. She had four dollars and ten cents saved toward her vacation, which was to have come in late August.

"You can go home as soon as you feel able," added the super magnanimously.

Nora guessed she felt able, but she almost guessed

wrong. When she reached her third story back, she pushed open the door and flopped onto her bed. As she lay there, the voice of her landlady came up to her.

"If a person is going to be sick," it announced to some unidentified audience below, "the hospital is the place for them. Them's my views."

Nora suspected of whom they were speaking. She shuddered. She lay in the gathering dusk. A west wind came, hot as if desert bred. Two men, colored, to judge from their accents, engaged in an altercation in the alley below. The front doorbell rang.

"Telegram for Miss Nolan," called her landlady from the front hall.

The idea was preposterous. Nora lay still, listening. The landlady, puffing from her ascent of the stairs, delivered the telegram and went mournfully away.

Nora opened and read it.

"Good night!" she said at last.

A slip of paper fluttered to the floor, but she let it go. She was busy, like the king who was in his counting-house, counting up his money.

"Two hundred bucks!" she exclaimed in a tone that expressed wonder, disbelief and a doubt as to whether she was awake. She solemnly pinched herself and added: "Ouch!"

She remembered the slip of paper on the floor and pounced upon it. The message consisted of four type-written words: *"From your fairy godmother."*

That fairy godmothers must have changed since the days of *Cinderella*, to type their messages and deliver them by A. D. T., was not the reason Nora suspected this one. Ever since she had been fourteen, she had fended for herself. Out of her experience she had mined a store of worldly wisdom, to which she had added nuggets of doubtful worth, picked up at the movies.

Nora did not believe in fairies. She was wise and wary beyond her years. She suspected a string somewhere.

"Suppose," she conjectured, "I spent the money."

"You will be sorry if you do," a still, small voice assured her.

Nora had a hunch the still, small voice was right.

Nevertheless—to make quick work of what Nora made very long work of indeed—there was, among the passengers who took the two-twenty for Winchester-by-the-Sea, a rather more than passably pretty girl who held her head high, as one who goes zestfully in search of adventure. Nora knew that this girl was doing wrong—but crime has its compensations. She wore a blue linen frock (\$21.75 at Fairfield's) which matched her eyes. In her suit-case of straw matting (which, because such things didn't count, had been picked up for \$2.25 in Gradine's bargain basement) were other recent purchases which Nora hoped wouldn't wrinkle.

"Little Nora," she assured the still, small voice, "is going to have the time of her life."

In the seat ahead of her were two women, who chattered volubly about the people she had read of in the Sunday supplements. One of them was quite distinguished-looking—tall and slender, with hair as dark as Nora's. She spoke so slurringly of the great that Nora felt sure that she must be supergreat. And she too was going to Winchester-by-the-Sea.

The color in Nora's cheeks deepened; the light in her eyes became worthy of a poet's best ecstasies. The landscape swinging by faded away, as an inner vision began supplying other pictures. They were the product neither of previous experience nor of pure imagination. In the movies (if you must know) the poor but beautiful shop-girl who is brought into contact with society always has the time of her life. At first, of course, she has her troubles, but in the end she always conquers.

The final close-up is simply great.

This was the stuff Nora's dream was made of. She was going to take the plunge. She had always wanted to see

Society, and now she was prepared to spend two hundred dollars, if necessary, for the privilege. Of course she should have known better. Perhaps, if she had had the wisdom of eighty, she would have saved the two hundred for a probable rainy day. But she was eighteen, and (perhaps you never heard this) that was just *Cinderella's* age.

And *Cinderella*, instead of being thankful that she had something to eat and something to wear and a place to sleep, was unreasonable enough to want pretty things—and to go to the ball.

There is no accounting for such things.

Nora was quite normal. In her heart there was the surety that some day she would meet her fairy prince. That she might meet him at Winchester-by-the-Sea had occurred to her as a pleasurable possibility. And because you might as well go the limit when you're wishing, she had endowed him with a million dollars.

The brakeman broke in upon Nora's musing by asking everybody present to guess at a riddle. The tall woman in front of Nora cheated. She looked out of the window and said: "This is it—Winchester-by-the-Sea."

Lined up around the station was an array of high-priced motors. There were touring-cars and town-cars, plain roadsters and chummy roadsters and aloof, distinguished limousines that couldn't be chummy if they tried. As Nora reached the platform, she glimpsed a joyous throng descending from the chair-car. There were girls in smart, cool-looking frocks, with dashes of color in their hats, and young men in Palm Beach suits—a fact which clutched fleetingly at Nora's memory—and flannels.

One of the girls, a striking blonde in tan linen, glanced



in Nora's direction. "Oh, Jeanot," she called, "you'll go up in the bus."

The tall, slender woman who had sat in front of Nora answered: "Oui, mademoiselle."

Nora also went up in the bus.

As it came to a stop at the entrance to the hotel,—which was simply tremendous to Nora's way of thinking,—bellboys came to meet it. One of them took Nora's suitcase and led her down a cool green velvet passage into a cool green lounge, at the end of which was the office.

The smart young clerk glanced at her and then at her suit-case.

"Maid?" he asked crisply.

Nora's blue eyes signaled danger, but he shifted easily and quickly to "Have you reserved rooms?"

Nora admitted that she had not. He hesitated a fraction of a second. Then—this was a tribute that Nora missed—he dipped a pen in ink and turned the register toward her.

"Do you want a bath?" he asked.

Nora felt outraged and looked it. The clerk saved the situation once more by adding that rooms without bath were five dollars a day and up—rooms with bath seven-fifty up.

"I'll have," said Nora with admirable nonchalance, "a seven-fifty with bath."

The clerk handed a key to the bellboy. "Four-eighty," he directed.

FOUR-EIGHTY proved wonderful. There was a mahogany writing-desk between the windows, with a reading-lamp on it. A long plate-glass mirror was set in a door which the bellboy opened, revealing the bath. He fussed about until Nora's eyes narrowed.

"You may go," she suggested.

He gave her a curious glance and went.

"This bunch," thought Nora, "gets on my nerves."

She opened her suit-case. A blue crêpe-de-chine (Grande's \$24.50) was somewhat mussed, but she contrived to shake out the worst wrinkles. She laid it on the bed and inspected the bathroom. This proved to be not even remotely related to the bathroom at Nora's boarding-house. She decided she would bathe. There was no use in paying for a bath and not using it.

Afterward she put on the crêpe-de-chine. The collar opened into a V and the long mirror corroborated her vision of herself in it. She descended to dinner at peace with the world.

The lounge was filled with laughing groups of young folk. A glance at the girls affirmed Nora's fear that perhaps the crêpe-de-chine was a little too dressy, even for dinner at a summer hotel. The girls were short-skirted, in heelless shoes and linen frocks and orange and cerise and turquoise sweaters. With them was a sprinkling of sleek, slim, tanned young chaps. As Nora crossed the lounge, they glanced at her, the girls with an air of aloof appraisal, the men with a more human interest.

The entrance of a tanned and rosy hoyden in a yellow sport-hat created a diversion. One of the men hailed her. He had, Nora noted, small, bold eyes, a negligible nose and prominent teeth.

"I say, Emily," he called; "heard the news? Norton has come."

"Jimmy Norton!" she exclaimed. And as he nodded, she added: "Will he pitch to-morrow?"

"That's what he's here for."

"Then," said Emily, "I see where you lose that bet."

"I see where I do," he admitted with a grimace, and everybody laughed.

Emily glanced at the clock. "Time to dress for dinner," she announced.

The groups broke up, and Nora, who felt it was time for dinner, wondered how much longer she must wait.

A half-hour passed before the lounge began to fill up again. Nora peeked over the magazine which apparently engrossed her, and was overwhelmed. The crêpe-de-chine sank into miserable insignificance in comparison with the gowns that appeared—exquisite foamy silks, frocks of tulle, chiffon décolletés with shoulder-straps that seemed too insouciant for the grave responsibility with which they were intrusted.

"A booby prize for little Nora!" thought she.

Nevertheless she was not Irish for nothing. She rose and crossed the lounge like a princess—too much like a princess. The head-waiter took her in charge and conveyed her to a little table near the kitchen. But Nora was conscious of no discrimination—fortunately for him. She picked up the menu and studied it, absolutely staggered by the choice presented her. But she managed to appear as if *hors d'œuvres* were as common to her experience as crackers and milk—which, as you may know, are highly recommended as a hot-weather meal by the doctors.

Nora was halfway through dinner when a young man appeared at the entrance to the great room. In his evening clothes he looked as attractive as few men do—except in the imagination of the talented creatures that draw the clothing-advertisements.

"Oh, you Jimmy Norton!" called Emily.

Instantly he became the object of all eyes. As he passed, smilingly, down the room, men reached out to shake hands and to introduce him to other men, or to pretty girls who dimpled their very best.

"Bring your whitewash with you?" somebody demanded.

There was a ripple of laughter, and he blushed as he sank into his place.

Nora's interest in him was pardonable and within reason. But his in her was, if not absolutely inexcusable, at least inexplicable. He did not notice her until, her dinner finished, she passed by his table. Then he simply stared. Of this Nora was not unconscious; she would not have been feminine if she had been.

Nora seated herself in the lounge and picked up her magazine. Her interest in it did not prevent her from seeing him emerge from the dining-hall. He paused at the desk and bought a package of cigarettes, lighted one and then examined the register. From this diversion he turned with disconcerting suddenness—disconcerting at least to Nora, who had had her eyes on his well-built back. She colored.

"Well, Mister Smarty," she thought, "I hope you know me the next time you see me."

Nevertheless she was not irrevocably displeased.

EMILY swept down upon Jimmy Norton and possessed him. After a time the orchestra gave forth a syncopated blast, and there was dancing. Some of the men regarded Nora speculatively; luckily they did no more. Nora was strong for the conventions. Were Mephistopheles present, she would have one-stepped with him, without question—provided he were properly introduced. But had Sir Galahad been there, and out of the fullness of a sympathetic imagination proffered himself and his hand for the next dance, she would have thanked him aloofly.

So Nora went out onto the veranda and sat on the rail and watched the phosphorescent surf. Between dinner little groups assembled on the veranda. They laughed and joked, and some of the girls smoked cigarettes—of which Nora disapproved. It was Theda Bara stuff.

The evening was still in its infancy when she retired to her room. She did not go to bed. She sat on it, her hands clasped around her knees and her chin propped between them, while she considered the situation. She had a hunch that she had picked a lemon. Arriving at that conclusion, she yawned and prepared herself for bed.

This necessitated the withdrawal of her worldly wealth from its place of concealment. The hotel management ad-

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Gregory hauled him. "Hey, Jimmy—did you leave anything of value in your room?" "My watch," he said. "Well, I hope you kissed it good-by," said Gregory. "Sneak-thieves raided the pavilion while we were all in bathing."

vised that all valuables be deposited at the office, but Nora ignored this advice. Her old grandmother, from Conemara, had been outspoken in her disrespect for banks and "the likes of thim," preferring an old tea-caddy. Nora's preference was fashioned of sheer silk.

"I wonder," thought Nora, just as she was slipping into sleep, "how much one of those silk sweaters and a sport-hat would cost here."

BREAKFAST over next morning, she proceeded to find out. There was a shop in the hotel. It had just the sweater Nora had visioned—and only *forty dollars!* Nora remained calm outwardly, but her emotions were curiously akin to those attributed to a bad case of drowning. A great deal of her past life passed before her—the bargain basement at Featherman's, her third-story back, her efforts to achieve a fifteen-dollar suit.

Forty dollars for a sweater!

"Perhaps," suggested the alert proprietress, "Mademoiselle would care to look at some slightly used garments."

"Mademoiselle!" thought Nora. "If she's French, so was my grandmother."

Nevertheless she accepted the suggestion. Fifteen minutes later she was the possessor of a glorified orange sweater with an adorable sport-hat to match. They cost twenty dollars. And then the temptress brought out a dancing-frock.

"Oh, well," decided the tempted after time had proved once more that she who temporizes is lost, "little Nora is ready to meet all comers now."

This was figurative, of course, because actually she met nobody. That did not prevent her social education from progressing rapidly, however. Nora had sharp ears, and she had no compunction in using them.

Emily, she learned, was a Westervelt-Moore. And if you accept the viewpoint of the large woman who wore a plaque of jewels over a yoke of Irish lace on her capacious chest, it was disgusting the way she took up Jimmy Norton. Of course, that was Emily's way—she would take up anybody. Of course, the rest of the rocking-chair brigade knew about Norton's father?

The chairs creaked excitedly: *what* about him?

He was simply impossible—absolutely so.

Nor was this all Nora heard. Had anyone observed that dark girl? Yes, the one that looked Irish. Well, she was Irish. Her name was Nolan. Actually! The management ought to protect its clientele. Heaven only knew who or what she was. Probably one of the *nouveaux riches*. She didn't look a day over twenty, though you never could tell—and she was without a chaperon.

The morning dragged. "And it costs seven-fifty a day," mused Nora. "Well, if this is high life, give me the bargain basement."

The ball game, that afternoon, she hailed as a "life-saver." Norton pitched. He wore a uniform with a varsity letter on it, and Nora admired the businesslike way in which he pulled down his cap, hitched his trousers and made the visitors look like monkeys. And when, in the ninth, he lined out a two-bagger, she gave vent to a quick, impulsive, "Hi-hi!"

The people about her, applauding decorously with a mere clapping of hands, glanced at her curiously. Nora colored. "I wonder," she thought, "what they would say if I yelled 'Cash!'"

Emily took charge of Norton as soon as the game was finished. Nora saw them talking and wondered what made Norton laugh. Her ears should have burned, for Emily, having congratulated the hero, spoke casually of Nora's "Hi-hi!" as a humorous sidelight on the game.

"I wonder," Emily added, "what she can be. Her name is Nolan."

"Perhaps," he suggested, "she's the only daughter of a Western miner who has struck it rich."

"No, she isn't," said Emily positively. "She'd have loads of jewelry and clothes." She paused and then added "Have you noticed her sweater?"

Norton had.

"Well, it was mine. I bought it in a fit of insanity because it was such a gorgeous color. Afterward I repented and sold it to the woman who runs the shop at the hotel."

"Mightn't it be another sweater just like it?" suggested Norton.

Emily smiled at him. "As if I wouldn't know!" she jeered. And she added serenely: "She is probably a shop girl—it's just the thing shop-girls do."

"I wonder," ventured Norton, "if she is enjoying herself."

"Enjoying herself! Of course she isn't."

"She isn't!" Norton's voice was shocked.

"Hardly. She came here thinking she would meet society and have the time of her life. And nobody even speaks to her. Can't you imagine the kind of time she is having?"

Norton could, and apparently it worried him. "I say, he broke out, "why don't you show her a good time?"

Emily stared her surprise, but he plunged on. "It would be a bully thing to do. Give her something she'll remember when she gets back to the bargain basement—"

"Does she come from the bargain basement?" Emily broke in.

Norton hesitated. "I—well, I happen to know that she does."

"How do you know?"

"I can't tell you that."

"Why?"

"I—well, Emily, I can't."

From this point, things went from bad to worse. He was interested in a good time for Nora, and she was interested in why he couldn't tell how he knew Nora came from a bargain basement.

"She is awfully pretty," he said, and added to clinch the matter (which it did): "Why, there isn't another girl here that can touch her."

Emily hardened. "When you feel that you can give me your whole confidence, perhaps I will consider it."

"I can't," he protested. "Be a sport, Emily."

Emily weakened for an instant. And then, because she was used to having her own way and also because she was a woman, she stiffened.

"If you feel so sorry," she said with great dignity, "you can devote yourself to her. I am sure she would enjoy that."

Norton's jaw set. And because he was a man, he said: "I will." But because he was a gentleman, by training at least, he said it to himself.

THE clerk introduced him to Nora, with due ceremony, after dinner. Nora wore the dancing-frock. It was yellow, and the memory of how the long glass had mirrored her still lighted little lamps in her eyes. When Norton suggested they dance, she danced. And Nora could dance. It came natural to her, like the wave in her hair.

Afterward they sat on the veranda-rail, and he asked if he might smoke. He might. And they talked about a number of things, such as the wonderful weather. Did she go in for tennis? She didn't know how to play, and he promised to teach her. And how long was she going to stay, and (the music starting) would she dance the next?

Would she?

Emily eyed them satirically, and Norton aware that he was in disfavor, reflected that he should worry. This proved prophetic, rather than figurative. As he and Norton fox-trotted by Emily and her partner, the significant words "bargain basement" reached his ears. He glanced at Emily, and her gaze met his with serene maliciousness.

Norton flushed. It had never (Continued on page 132)



"WHOM the gods would destroy, they first make tricky. . . . Women are never tricky. Women are diplomatic."

—from "The Book of Flossie Mae Darty."

FLOSSIE MAE, Successful WIFE

By ELLIS
PARKER BUTLER

Illustrated by
CLARENCE W. ANDERSON

"I dreamed
I saw the
skins of eight
big men nailed
to the walls of
the humble home
of Pat Darty,"
said Flossie Mae.

A MAN is mayor of Riverbank two years; and then, if he likes the job and can swing the votes, he may be mayor another two years, and so on endlessly. Mayor Darty liked his first two-year taste. It warmed his heart to be called "Your Honor." It quickened the beating of his heart to think that a descendant of Brian Boru, meaning himself, was ruler of the town. There were other reasons. The salary helped somewhat, but being the Honorable Padraic Darty helped his real-estate business magically. You can be plain Brick Darty and starve, but business will come to the Honorable Padraic Aloysius Darty, Mayor of Riverbank. Even the mayor of a small town begins to have henchmen and heelers who bring him business.

But most of all, Darty liked being mayor because it had put Flossie Mae, his handsome wife, near the top of Riverbank society, where she shone but third to the brilliant lights of Mrs. Doane and Mrs. Benderman, who still fought for the leadership.

"Dear soul of my heart," said Brick to Flossie Mae one day as his term neared its end, "do you want to be lady mayoress another term?"

"It is not 'Do I want to be?' Brick," Flossie Mae answered. "It is 'I mean to be.' That is, if you are willing to bear the cares of state that much longer. Are you?"

"I love the glory of it as a cat loves fish," said Brick with a grin. "So that is settled, dear light of the world. Lawyer Bean was here but this morning, saying the Eight Big Men of Riverbank were well satisfied with me—as I hope the people are—and that I may have the nomination again if I wish it."

"Ah!" said Flossie Mae cryptically.

"I told him I had but to ask the wife of my soul what she desired, before I gave him my answer."

"Ah!" said Flossie Mae again.

"So now he shall have it," said Brick. "I will tell him this afternoon."

Flossie Mae said nothing for a minute.

"Brick," she said then, roughing his red hair with her hand, as she loved to do, "how is our money? Are we

doing well? Could I, do you suppose, have another maid at the house, if I could get a good one?"

"Another maid?" he asked. "Sure, queen of the roses. There's nothing I'd like better than to see you with a house full of them, as I have no doubt the castle of Brian Boru was in the old days. Have you decided that Anna is no longer able to cope with the labors of our elegant dwelling?"

Flossie Mae kissed him.

"Anna is a dear," she said, "and I'll never part with her, but if we entertain a great deal this winter, the work may be too hard for her. Leave it to me, Brick dear; the house is my affair, is it not?"

That afternoon Rudge Bean, the cleverest lawyer in Riverbank, came to Darty for his answer and received it. He expressed his joy, with a dozen spasmodic grins, and went back to tell the Eight Big Men that Darty had said he was willing to run again, and Darty did a jig behind his desk. He was one of those who have a lot of boy in them.

The Eight Big Men of Riverbank, who were mighty and usually prevailed, owned the public-service corporations and much else. They had a way of making mayors and unmaking them, and they waited for Rudge Bean in Mr. Doane's office. They had decided to bury Darty so deep that he would never be resurrected.

"We can't put him in our pocket," Bean had said. "He can't be bought. He can't be driven, led or chased. He can't be mesmerized or persuaded. He's a dangerous man for us."

"Why?" old Doane had asked.

"There are a million reasons, more or less," Bean had said, "and one is that he is one of the independent brand of Irishmen; some nine hundred thousand other reasons are the gray-matter cells in the brain of that wife of his, Flossie Mae. She is all for Darty. She is going to try to make a big man of him—a governor or a Senator; and what we want is a man we can handle. We've got to put Darty in a can and solder the lid down tight."

"Well? Who do you offer instead, Bean?" asked Doane.

"We want a man with a dummy wife. We want a lovely nobody. I suggest Samuel Darlington."

The Eight Big Men of Riverbank mused over this name for a few minutes.

"Yes, he will do," said Doane then. "Old family, needy, has to keep up appearances, nothing against him. He'll do. We will begin to boom him to-day—"

"Oh, no!" said Bean with his wry smile of cunning. "Never pin-prick an Irishman like Darty. That wild son

of the emerald sod would rip the world into shreds between now and election-day. No, we'll give him a pleasant narcotic."

"What do you mean, Bean?"

While they bent their heads together, Bean whispered his plan, and they went about the work silently and deftly, as they went about most things. Bean would promise Darty the nomination and the support of the Eight Big Men. He would spur Darty to attack the only other political power—the Gilroy-Penderson crowd—and lead him on to make himself eternally obnoxious to them. Then at the last moment they would "throw" Darty—leave him out of it—and force the nomination of Sam Darlington.

"All on the quiet! Not a peep out of anyone!" said Bean, twisting his face into a smile. "We'll have one surprised Irishman in Riverbank, and he will be as dead as he will be surprised."

Bean hunted up Darty then, and arranged things with him.

"There will be objections," he said. "There will be those who will say you are bound hand and foot by us, but don't worry, Darty. You know what we can do. Your job is to pound Gilroy and Penderson from now until the caucus. Take this attitude—I don't care who is mayor, so long as it is not one of Gilroy's greedy grafters. Pound that hard."

"I'll pound it till the cows come home to roost on Riverbank's ship of state with Brick Darty at the throttle once more," said Darty enthusiastically, and Bean went away well satisfied. He grinned an evil grin when he was outside.

Flossie Mae received the news that the Eight Big Men had promised to support Darty and made no unpleasant comment.

"I'm glad it is all settled, Brick," she said. "There's no doubt they can elect whom they choose."

The "whom" was a new one, a touch of elegance she had picked up through associating with Mrs. Doane and Mrs. Benderman. She used it whenever she could.

"Brick," she said presently, "we did not give Anna much last Christmas."

"What?" asked Brick, not catching her meaning at once, for his thoughts were on matters of grandeur.

"I say we only gave Anna a poor twenty-five dollars and a silk dress and a tortoise-shell comb and a plush-covered hot-water bag last Christmas, and she is a faithful servant if ever there was one."

"There was also the gold-handled umbrella and the near-seal purse, angel of the world," said Darty.

"Trifles, Brick," said Flossie Mae, "and I know her heart is set on a sweet gold watch as thin as a lozenge, with her monogram all over one side. The new maid I will have by your permission will be a hoity-toity person, and we must not have Anna feeling jealousy and leaving us. Fifty dollars—"

"Ouch!" said Darty.

"Oh, very well!" said Flossie Mae. "I have a hundred or two of my own, if it comes to that."

There was, however, nothing Darty could refuse his wife, and the watch was bought.

"And see that, now!" said Anna with real tears in her eyes as she looked at the wafer-thin watch in its pretty case. "Sure, you treat me too good, Missus Darty! May God bless the ground you walk on, for you and the boss is the salt of the earth if ever there was one."

"Make us plain Irish, Anna," said Flossie Mae, "for salt kills the green sod, and Darty and I would not wish to do that. I'd not wish to be Lot's wife and no good but to be pounded up to use in the ice-cream freezer."

So they laughed over it, and Anna wiped her eyes and set the watch and thought Brick and Flossie Mae were a king and a queen, as they were—as much as any may be in a free land.

The days passed.

One evening Brick was sitting in his easy-chair with his shoeless feet propped on another chair before him—as is the inborn right of Irish kings, crowned and uncrowned—when Flossie Mae came behind him. She put the heels of her hands over his ears and covered his eyes with her fingers and bent down and closed his mouth with a kiss.

"What is all this, now?" asked Brick. "Are you making a monkey of the Mayor of Riverbank?"

"One of those Japanese ones," said Flossie Mae. "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil," Brick. "I've seen a worry in your eyes. Are you suspecting things?"

"I am that," he admitted. "When the future of a scion of the Irish kings is in the hands of the Eight Big Rascals of Riverbank, and there are rumblings of treason—"

"Brick dear," said Flossie Mae, "it is what I feared! The curse of politics is upon you. Be trusting! Be guileless! I had a dream last night."

"I believe in them when you have them, dear heart of the world," said Brick.

"I dreamed I saw the skins of eight big men nailed to the walls of the humble home of Pat Darty," said Flossie Mae, "but on the roof was the skin of one Rudge Bean stretched out like a parchment, and these words painted on it: 'Remember Flossie Mae!'"

Brick cogitated in silence.

"A wife that has no faith in her husband," he said presently, "and does not tell him the goings-on of her mind, is like a nettle in an undershirt."

Flossie Mae laughed.

"I mean there is treachery afoot, Brick dear," she said; "but forewarned is forearmed. The Eight Big Men and their Bean are proclaiming you as their candidate, and the Gilroy gang have settled upon old Enoch R. Miller again; so the town is saying it will be Darty against Miller this time as it was last. Not a whisper of any name but yours has come from the Eight Big Men. But—"

"You mean there is treachery. The hand I hardly bit at all when it fed me is going to give me a clout over the head?"

"Listen, Brick," said Flossie Mae. "You don't suppose I gave Anna a watch in mid-year for the pleasure of spending your good money, do you? The man the Eight Big Men mean to run against Miller is Sammy Darlington."



Flossie Mae chose that afternoon to make a few calls—about nine of them.

"A well-tailored lapdog," said Brick. "But how do you make that guess?"

"It is no guess, but a certainty, Brick," Flossie Mae assured him. "You know the business Sammy Darling-ton is in at the moment?"

"Agent for a London tailor," grinned Brick.

"And you know the clothes Rudge Bean wears? They come off a shelf, and the white labels have to be cut off them before they can be worn in public. No tape-measure has touched his form since he was a babe. What would happen if he had a suit made to order?"

"The end of the world," said Brick.

"And that is not due yet," said Flossie Mae. "So I put one and one together—"

"Wait a bit," said Brick. "You go too fast for me."

"Well, Anna has a brother Joe, has she not?"

"A fine lad, and he has an easy job in the office of Carter, in the Opera House Block," Brick admitted.

"From the window of which he can look down into the office of Rudge Bean," said Flossie Mae, "and eight times this last week Sammy climbed the stairs to the office of Rudge Bean with his sample-book under his arm and held conversations with the right-hand man of the Eight Big Men. Three times he met Doane there, and once it was Doane and Benderman. Now, there are eight good reasons why Sammy Darling-ton would make a good candidate for mayor. The first is—"

"I know all of them," said Darty. "I have been blind!"

"Continue to be," said Flossie Mae.

She whispered rapidly in his ear, and as she whispered, he grinned and from time to time nodded his head.

"There's none so keen-sighted as them that pretend to be blind," he said at length.

"Hang the sign around my neck and fetch me the dog."

"Whom," said Flossie Mae, with an accent on the "whom," "whom the gods would destroy they first make tricky."

"Meaning the Eight Big Men," said Brick, "and not yourself."

"Women are never tricky," said Flossie Mae with a toss of her head. "Women are diplomatic."

Rudge Bean, the cleverest man in Riverbank, was rubbing his hands in gleeful satisfaction and grinning at nothing but his general pleasure with the way things were going at just the minute when Mrs. Doane, in a superb satin morning-gown, came down from her room in her home some two miles from Bean's office. She had had her breakfast in bed and felt well satisfied with life, but as she made the turn in the stairs, she stopped short.

"Mary!" she said sharply.

"Yes ma'am?" the maid answered.

Mrs. Doane could scarcely believe her eyes. Mary was sitting on the hall bench reading the morning paper, when she should have been dusting.

"Are you ill?" asked Mrs. Doane, as if nothing else could account for the girl's remarkable behavior.

"Oh, no ma'am!" said Mary. "I'm quite well. I was just waiting for you to come down. I want to give notice, ma'am."

"Mary! What do you mean?"

"I'm giving notice, ma'am, as plain as I know how, that I'll be leaving you in two weeks," said the girl. "I've a better place offered me, with less work and more wages, ma'am, and a girl must make the best of her chances while she has them."

"Very well!" said Mrs. Doane grimly. "I trust you will not be sorry. Send cook to me."

"Yes ma'am," said the girl, and went to the kitchen.

The cook came.

"You've had no quarrel with Mary, Agnes?" asked Mrs. Doane. "She tells me she is going to leave me. Do you know why?"

"Nothing but the same reason I have, Mrs. Doane," said the cook. "I've been offered an easier place, with less work and better wages; so I will take this opportunity, ma'am, of giving fair notice and warning. Of course, ma'am, I'll let you have the two weeks to find some one—"

"That will do!" said Mrs. Doane sharply. "You may go back to the kitchen. I will speak to you later about the matter."

She looked at her wrist-watch and made a brief calculation. Mrs. Benderman, she knew, always did her own marketing,—in state, in the Benderman carriage,—and she should be downtown at this moment. She went to the telephone and called up the Benderman house. Jane, the unexcelled Benderman maid, answered, as Mrs. Doane had hoped she would.

"Is that you, Jane?" Mrs. Doane breathed into the receiver. "Mrs. Benderman is not in? Well, it was you I wanted to speak to, Jane. You know how light the work is in my house, and what a pretty room I always have for my maids? I'm letting Mary go, and I thought I would offer the position to you first of all—"

"Yes ma'am," answered Jane. "I'm sure I'm very grateful, but I've made other arrangements. Cook and I gave Mrs. Benderman notice this morning, Mrs. Doane, because we have a better place in view."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Doane coldly. "You do not think you care to reconsider?"

"No, ma'am—I'm afraid not."

Mrs. Doane hung up. Her face was rather red now, for while she would have been willing to bear the Benderman reproaches if she could have stolen the Benderman maid and the

Benderman cook, she dreaded those reproaches when her attempted theft had been unsuccessful. She hesitated with her hand on the receiver and then removed it from its hook and called the Farrington number. She was less lucky here, for Mrs. Farrington herself answered. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Farrington had called the Doane



number and was saying "Hello—hello!" When the two ladies heard each other's voices, they were momentarily abashed. Each had hoped to get the other's maid on the wire.

In the eight homes of the Eight Big Men of Riverbank, and in the home of Rudge Bean, nine maids and nine cooks had given notice that morning!

Flossie Mae chose that afternoon to make a few calls—about nine of them. Before she left the house she called Anna to draw down the flimsy underskirt of her gown.

"And they all agreed, Anna?" she asked.

"Every one of them, ma'am—the whole eighteen. You can trust them all, Mrs. Darty, and not one of them will say why they've given notice. It was all agreed and sworn to at the meeting of the Domestic Servants' Union night before last, and they'll be faithful and true to the last. The way I put it to them they'll never give in, for they know no one but Mr. Darty would ever plan to start a Municipal Employment Bureau for us poor girls. Mum is our motto, ma'am, until you give the word."

"That is nice, Anna. I do thank you. Does it hang all right in the back now?"

"Yes, ma'am; it just needed a little pull. It's like I told them, ma'am. The Bureau will be a great thing for all the girls that want places, and by having the nineteen best of us to start with, the Bureau will get a grand reputation immediately, and all of them can get places in a minute, being the best to be had anywhere."

"Exactly!" said Flossie Mae. "I do thank you, Anna."

In making the rounds of her calls, Flossie Mae said nothing of the proposed Municipal Bureau for Domestic Servants. She spoke, with due indolence and negligence, of the success Darty was having in his business, and expressed her gratitude to the world in general for it.

Mrs. Doane, who had the pleasure of her first visit, listened with no great satisfaction.

"I suppose," she said rather sharply, "you'll be hiring another maid or a cook soon."

"Mr. Darty has said he is willing," said Flossie Mae modestly. "He is willing to let me have another maid and a cook now. I've been making inquiries, but I have not decided whom I shall hire."

"Humph!" said Mrs. Doane, and bit her lips.

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Mrs. Doane answered absent-mindedly the words that Flossie Mae spoke during her call. When Flossie Mae arose at the end of the call, Mrs. Doane did not stand.

"Sit down, Flossie Mae," she commanded. "I want to know what is at the bottom of all this."

"All what, Mrs. Doane?" asked Flossie Mae.

"Now, I won't have any of that!" said Mrs. Doane. "I like you, Flossie Mae, and you know it. I took you up when you came to Riverbank and married that terrible red-haired genius that you have made mayor, and I like him well enough too. He is an amusing person."

"He wouldn't be half so amusing if he was not mayor," said Flossie Mae.

"Humph! I thought so! So that is it, is it? Well, who is keeping him from being mayor, if he wants to be?"

"Dear me!" said Flossie Mae. "Nobody, I'm sure!"

"Now, Flossie Mae," said Mrs. Doane, "I know you and your tricks and manners. I've heard enough to-day to let me see through a grindstone. I've been telephoning. I know whose maids and cooks have given notice."

"Anna gave me notice," said Flossie Mae innocently.

"Notice, fudge!" said Mrs. Doane. "You couldn't drive that girl away from you with a cat-o'-ninetails! Notice, indeed! You've done something to get the maids and cooks of what are called the Eight Big Men to give notice. You can take your pick of them, or send them all out of town. I'm not a fool. You want something—what?"



"I will cook for him myself," Mrs. Doane had said grimly.

Chas. W. Anderson

"I'm sure that I have never done anything to make you think such horrid things of me," declared Flossie Mae.

"Every maid and every cook that is worth having in a house giving notice at once! What do you want?" demanded Mrs. Doane again.

"There is only one thing I could want, and that has been promised already," said Flossie Mae. "I want Brick to be mayor again, and Mr. Rudge Bean has promised that. The Eight Big Men have promised it."

Mrs. Doane was silent.

"And of course," said Flossie Mae gently, "the Eight Big Men always keep their promises."

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"They will this time!" she said sternly. "If that is what is in the wind, we'll make short work of it, I can promise you! Nine wives to be without help because of some fiddling little politics! Indeed!"

When Mrs. Doane gave her informal tea to the eight wives most concerned and stated her suspicions, there were objections to the plan she proposed.

"For my part," said Mrs. Benderman angrily, "I do not propose to let myself be run over by any such person as Flossie Mae Darty. She comes to town a nobody—"

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If you want a vigorous constitution you must begin with a good appetite and good digestion. This is one particular value of

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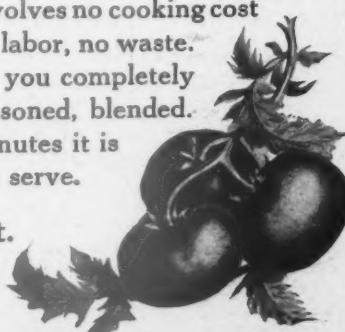
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Campbell's Tomato Soup

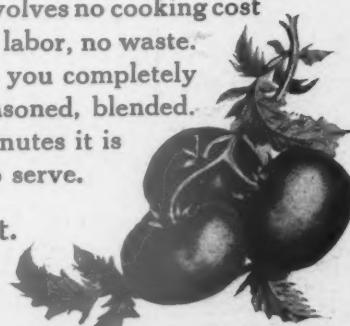
It is among the best of wholesome appetizers. It is especially useful in strengthening digestion and providing the proper dietary balance.

It gives you one of nature's finest tonics—the pure juice of fresh ripe tomatoes—blended with other choice ingredients in a combination that is both tempting and nutritious.

Served as a Cream of Tomato this

inviting soup yields 50 per cent more energy than an equal quantity of milk. And you can prepare it in various ways to make it as hearty as you choose.

Its use involves no cooking cost for you, no labor, no waste. It comes to you completely cooked, seasoned, blended. In three minutes it is all ready to serve.



Order a dozen or more, and get the full benefit.
The nation needs stanch men and women, as well as stanch ships.

21 kinds

12c a can

Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

in Riverbank and is free to take her choice."

"Well, what is to be done, then?" asked Mrs. Benderman.

"Just what I told you," said Mrs. Doane. "We are nine ladies here, and our husbands can make the mayor they choose. They must make Mr. Darty mayor again. I do not know what influence you have with your husbands, but I can speak for myself. Mr. Doane will not deprive me of my cook and my maid, I can tell you that!"

"And if he insists?" asked Mrs. Bean, who was rather afraid of her husband.

"I will cook for him myself," said Mrs. Doane grimly. "I did it before and I will do it again, no matter what the consequences may be. Fortunately—I say fortunately—he has never recovered from the dyspepsia he incurred when I cooked for him last."

"Poor Mr. Bean's stomach is so tender!" sighed Mrs. Bean.

"Men who are as successful as our husbands always have tender stomachs," said Mrs. Doane. "For my part, I mean to give my cook two days' vacation, beginning to-morrow. I am going to be cheerful and brave over it all, and make fried bread as I used to make it just after we were married."

"Dumplings for Mr. Benderman," said Mrs. Benderman grimly. "I have a recipe of my grandmother's. They are

delicious until about two o'clock in the morning, but I will have emptied the pepsi down the drain. I will take a nap in the afternoon so I can sit up in bed and talk to Mr. Benderman."

Mrs. Bean sighed.

"The last time we had my fried steak and onions, we had to have two doctors, one for me and one for Rudge," she said.

"Waffles!" said Mrs. Farrington. "Mine are limp and leathery. Dear Mr. F. puts his hand on his stomach and closes his eyes and groans. He walks for hours and hours with his hand on his stomach and swears when I mention the hot-water bottle."

"I read a recipe a few days ago," said Mrs. Burt, "that sounded so delicious! You take boiled parsnips and mash them and brown them in a dish with cheese and pie-crust. When he eats my pie-crust, Mr. Burt gets green under the eyes and around the mouth. He lies flat on his back and says 'Ah-h! Oh-h!'"

Some five days later Mr. Doane crept into Rudge Bean's office and asked the stenographer where the handy-man was.

"He won't be down to-day," said the girl. "He's not feeling very well."

"Nobody's down!" growled Mr. Doane. "Everybody's sick! I'm done up myself! Get the infernal rascal on the telephone!"

The message was short when Mr. Doane got Bean on the wire.

"Look here, Bean," he said. "You've

overreached yourself. I don't know what the rigmarole means that my wife was telling me, but this thing has got to stop! Understand that? You've got to elect this man Darty mayor again. Understand that? No nonsense! He's a good man, and he's made a good mayor—"

"Now, don't you come shouting at me like a wild man, Doane!" Bean shouted back at him. "I won't stand any such talk. I'm a sick man—"

"You do what I tell you!" howled Doane.

"Oh, shut up!" said Bean, who was in agony. "My wife telephoned Flossie Mae Darty an hour ago. Go home and go to bed! You nor nobody else can make me do what I don't want to do!"

He slammed his receiver on its hook, and Mr. Doane, being able to do nothing else to show his anger, slammed his receiver on its hook. For a full minute he glared at it; then he ordered the girl to call Sam Darlington.

"Look here!" he said. "This is Doane speaking. You can't be mayor this time. Understand that?"

"Not this time?" asked Darlington. "Very well, Mr. Doane. When can I be?"

"How do I know?" asked Doane savagely. "I haven't asked Flossie Mae Darty yet. Do you think I own this town? If you want to know when you can be mayor, go ask her yourself!"

A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK

(Continued from page 79)

on Florida Avenue, at a certain address, there was a shoe-shining parlor of which the proprietor was a German, whereas almost all the other bootblacks in town were either black or tan, and that was suspicious in itself; but furthermore several young men who had patronized him had been afflicted almost immediately afterwards with falling arches, and it was believed he was using polish of such chemical composition that it would penetrate the leather and cause this condition of the feet, the object of course being to decrease the man power eligible for the draft by rendering them physically deficient.

He gave me the address, and I returned to the hotel and got Mother, for I thought she might as well go along in the taxi for the drive, and of course I would leave her and the machine far enough from the shine-stand to be perfectly safe in case of an outbreak of any kind. But the neighborhood to which we had to go looked so disreputable that I was afraid to leave her—so I told the driver to take her back to the hotel and I would return on the street-car when my work was done.

Well, there was no shine-parlor at the address Tracy had given me—nothing, in fact, but a vacant lot. So I returned to the hotel and called up Tracy, who said he must have had the wrong address, but anyway he was sure the tip was good and if he were I, he would look around town a little and try to find the shine-stand that was not conducted by negroes. But I had an engagement in the afternoon, and of course it was folly to try to do anything about it last night, and there

was a dance to which I had accepted an invitation. So I merely wrote down the data I had and gave it to one of the men at the Department this morning.

I heard a bit of rather sad news at the dance. Miss Stark, the girl of whom I believe I once wrote you, was not there, and it seems that her fiancé, who had been in France a year, was so badly wounded last week that he has been honorably discharged as unfit for further service and will be sent back here as soon as he is able to make the trip. It is tough on a young fellow to get it like that, and of course she felt so bad over the news that she would not come to the dance, and as a result I had a rather tedious evening of it. However, I called her up this forenoon and did what I could to cheer her, and to-morrow I am to take her for a drive unless there is some special assignment for me at headquarters.

Your affectionate grandson,
CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 1.
DEAR Grandfather:

Well, Grandfather, I just had the pleasure of meeting Gen. Rowan, one of the biggest men in the country to-day, but of course there is no need of my telling you who he is. Capt. Bellows introduced me to him, and he asked us both to sit down at his table and visit a moment. He inquired what branch I was in, and I told him, and he seemed very much interested in me and asked whether I was all right physically. I told him I certainly was, though sometimes I felt awfully tired and nervous in the morning. Then he said to Bellows:

"Why is it some of you boys don't try to get to France?"

Bellows said he supposed it was because most of us had been there with our parents several years ago, so it would be no novelty, and others of us preferred waiting until long enough after the war so that the country would be rebuilt to look something like its old self. Then the General asked us if we would please get up and leave him, as he felt rather nauseated and wanted to be alone; so of course we got up and left. Poor old General, I suppose he is in a decline and won't be of service much longer, but everyone seems to think highly of him now, and I guess the country would be better off if there were more like him, only younger, of course.

Between you and me, Grandfather, I am not very well satisfied with the way things are being run here. There appears to be a lack of seriousness, particularly in my branch of the service. For instance, I have turned in four or five clues for the Department to work on, and so far as I can make out, nothing has been done with any of them. I cannot get a satisfactory answer when I complain, and altogether it is discouraging to work under such conditions. Sometimes I feel like chucking the whole thing up and taking Mother back home. But of course that is just a temporary spell, you might call it, for nothing could drive me from my duty at a time like this.

Miss Stark, the girl I have written you about, received word from France yesterday that her fiancé would not be able to leave the hospital and start back for two months or more, and of course she feels

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What causes skin blemishes

*The way to remove blemishes and
to remove their cause*

EVERYONE is immediately attracted by a clear skin—soft, free from blemishes and unsightly spots.

Every girl longs for it.

If your skin is not as clear as you would love to have it, find out just what is causing the blemishes that mar it. Then start at once to remove not only the blemishes, but their cause.

Skin specialists say they are tracing fewer and fewer skin troubles to the blood—and more to the bacteria and parasites that are carried into the pores with dust, soot and grime.

To keep your skin clear from the spots and blemishes caused in this way, you must remove the blemishes you already have and prevent the appearance of fresh ones.

Just before retiring, wash

in your usual way with warm water and Woodbury's Facial Soap and then dry your face. Now dip the tips of your fingers in warm water and rub them on the cake of Woodbury's until they are covered with a heavy cream-like lather. Cover each blemish with a thick coat of this soap cream and leave it on for ten minutes. Then rinse very carefully with clear, hot water; then with cold.

Use this treatment regularly until the blemishes disappear, and supplement it with the regular use of Woodbury's in your daily toilet. This will keep your skin so firm and active that it will resist the frequent cause of blemishes.

The 25 cent cake of Woodbury's will last for a month or six weeks if any facial treatment and for general cleansing use for that time. For sale at drug stores and toilet goods counters throughout the United States and Canada.

Send for sample cake of soap with booklet of famous treatments and samples of Woodbury's Facial Cream and Facial Powder.

Send 6c for a trial size cake (enough for a week or ten days of any Woodbury Facial treatment) together with the booklet of treatments, "A Skin You Love to Touch." Or for 12c we will send you the treatment booklet and samples of Woodbury's Facial Soap, Fa-

cial Cream and Facial Powder. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1709 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio.

If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Limited, 1709 Sherbrooke St., Perth, Ontario.

If your skin is pale and sallow, try the new steam treatment given in the booklet, "A Skin You Love to Touch." With your Woodbury's Facial Soap you will get one of these interesting booklets.



pretty blue over it. Well, it's all in the game, grandfather.

Your affectionate grandson,
CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 8.

DEAR Grandfather:

Congratulate me, Grandfather! I am engaged to the dearest girl that ever lived or ever could live. You would be crazy about her if you could see her, which I trust will be in the near future, for she has relatives in Sandusky, the J. F. Hammonds, whom perhaps you know, though they are new people there and I know you don't get around much any more. But anyway, if I can get leave of absence, I will come to Sandusky and she will arrange to be there at the same time, and I can bring her to see you, for I know you will be crazy about her.

We are planning to be married in the fall, for neither of us wants to wait long, and I am confident we can get along on my salary.

I am too happy to write much, but I wanted you to be among the first to know. Of course it is unnecessary to tell you her name, as I know I have written about her till you must be sick of my maudlin ravings. But anyway I will tell you: it's Kathryn Stark, the girl who I once told

you was "some peach." Well, she is, Grandfather, if you will pardon the slang.

Mother is almost as wild about her as I am, and when you have met her and given us your blessing, everything will be perfect.

We think we will have a rather quiet wedding, as Kathryn was engaged to marry a poor sucker who went to France and was so badly wounded that he is through as a soldier, and will be sent home as soon as he can travel. So of course we don't want any big splurge.

Well, Grandfather, good-by for this time and I wish it weren't so much trouble for you to write so you could congratulate me. But never mind; it will be time enough when I see you.

Your affectionate grandson,
CAPT. EVAN BARNES.

SANDUSKY, O., July 11.

Capt. Evan Barnes,
Sleuth Department, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR:

As you say, it is a great deal of trouble for me to write. Yet I am going to take that trouble once or twice more before my pen and I are too hopelessly rusted.

Your confidence that you will be able to live on your salary pleases me beyond

measure and leaves me free to dispose of my modest means as I see fit. I presume that should you, in some dare-devil undertaking in behalf of your government, lose sight of discretion in patriotism and perish of, say, poisoned shoe-blacking your widow would always be well provided for by said government. Nevertheless I beg you to take no needless risk; for the Government, under stress of other weighty matters, might forget.

In view of our relationship and former acquaintance, may I make three requests?

First, that neither you nor your lady nor both of you attempt to visit me here. My physician advises me that any excitement would probably be my death-warrant.

Second, that you forward me the name and address of the poor sucker who enlisted in the infantry right after we declared war, won only a corporal's stripes though he fought in France a year and is now lying in a French hospital, through as a soldier.

Third, that the letter providing me with the information regarding him be the last you write me, for though it is a great deal of trouble for me to write, it is even more to read.

Your grandfather (God help him),
HENRY R. BARNES.

THE RESURRECTION OF SLACK-LIME JONES

(Continued from page 46)

She carries both passengers and mails. Your gun is only for defense, and when you try to use this vessel as a mere instrument of destruction, you're making it needful for us to take measures."

"What measures?" demanded Jones languidly. He had perfectly the air of being intensely bored.

"We'll take this steamship over and send by wireless for a cruiser or destroyer to help us in," said the spokesman a little angrily. "You don't seem to realize—"

"I realize one thing," said Slack-Lime Jones, lifting his dull eyes to the speaker, "—that is, your costly mistake." He let his glance run around on the many faces turned toward him, and, I think, caught the general murmur of those deluded passengers. I was on the upper bridge, looking down, and it struck me that this assemblage meant business; they had been scared to death, and like all human beings, they bitterly resented it. Moreover I felt that Captain Jones was taking the affair too easily. Didn't he understand the seriousness of the moment—that this was mutiny? I pricked up my ears when he said those few words: "your costly mistake." What did he mean? I leaned over, filled with curiosity, just in time to see the *Cerulean*'s commander take a revolver from his pocket, level it at the man's head and fire.

I was still staring down when Tommy's big fingers squeezed my arm, and his oddly tense voice said in my ear: "By gad, they've got us!"

Quick as winking I followed his slight movement and saw overside a gleam in the water like the feather of a pen. Ha! I thought, and turned once more to look

down on the lower bridge-deck. To this hour I can call up the picture as it stood before me—Jones facing the swaying crowd across the huddle of a dead body, the bobbing heads of those in the rear ranks trying to see exactly what had happened; beyond them, at a distance, were the straight figures of the gun-crew.

THE torpedo got home right abreast the bridge, and when the racket subsided and I found myself still alive, it took but a glance to show me that the *Cerulean* was mortally injured. She was already careening to starboard as the sea poured into the huge gap in her steel side. But quick as my glances had been, and swift as my decision, Captain Jones had anticipated me. To this day I'm unable to guess how he escaped the first force of the explosion, for the deck where he had stood was gone. But the first words I heard were his, giving his orders coolly; and I am certain that within a minute of actual time, the steamer's boats were being filled without disorder.

A single boat on the port side got away before the tilt of the sinking vessel prevented all effort there. The starboard boats were plenty to hold our complement, and I instinctively stayed with Tommy Edwards on the bridge while the other officers and the crew did their best to keep order and hasten matters. So interested was I in the scene that I was startled to hear Slack-Lime Jones' voice in my ears:

"Nobody will be lost, I think," he said quietly, "except those killed by the explosion. It was too bad that fellow insisted on making his speech just at that time. It was more costly than I thought. —Mr. Edwards, you and your friend here

had better get in that boat. Plenty of room!"

The deck was now at an angle of about forty degrees sideways, and the stern was steadily rising as the forepart of the ship was flooded. It was plain that we had but a moment more.

"Come along, sir!" cried Tommy.

Jones smiled on us paternally. "I've done all the explaining I'm ever going to do," he remarked loudly and clearly. "Off with you, boys!"

Tommy and I scrambled up the deck as best we could, only to find that it was slipping down into the sea faster than we could climb. The last boat had been ticklishly lowered and was now riding a dozen fathoms off. We halted breathlessly.

THE *Cerulean* was a big ship, and as she lifted her stern into the air, I was seized with awe. It was just as though one should cling to a corner grille on the Woolworth Building and look up and see its topmost pinnacle swaying downward, and the whole mass slipping steadily, swiftly, hissing into some profound depths, brushing you murmuringly as it flowed downward.

Actually, I fancy, I experienced this prodigious sensation for only a couple of seconds. Then Tommy swung himself into the netting of the boat-deck rail and began to climb up it toward a davit that now poked straight out like a tiny finger. He gained it, and with a gesture at once hurried and comic, whipped the idle falls to me. I caught on and instantly swung outboard. I glanced up and saw Tommy staring down at me, and beyond his white face the tremendous and inexorable mass of the steamship's after-body turning

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Bebe Love, one of motion pictures' most delightful stars, says: "The Cutex way of manicuring is indeed pleasing, especially when your hands must always look freshly manicured."

Jessie Reed, who was "Beauty" in "Sinbad," the Winter Garden Show which played in New York, says: "I scarcely knew my nails when I had finished manicuring them with Cutex, they looked so well-groomed!"



When you see how well Cutex makes your nails look, you will never go back to the cutting method



Apply a little Cutex Nail White under the nails. It removes all discolorations



Finish your manicure with Cutex Nail Polish. Gives your nails a transparent, lasting polish

Why you must not cut the cuticle

Manicure your nails without cutting.
See how much lovelier they *can* look!

IN manicuring your nails don't cut or trim the cuticle. When you cut the cuticle, it grows tough and ragged. It breaks and forms hangnails. All around the base of the nail little cracks open upon the tender, sensitive skin underneath—the appearance of your whole hand is ruined!

Knowing the need for a safe and efficient cuticle remover, a specialist worked out the formula for Cutex. Cutex has taken the place of the ruinous knife and scissors. It is absolutely harmless. It will quickly remove surplus cuticle without cutting, leaving the skin at the

base of the nail firm and smooth.

How to manicure without cutting

Wrap a little cotton around the end of an orange stick. Both cotton and orange stick come in the Cutex package. Dip the stick into the bottle and work around the base of the nail, gently pushing back the cuticle. Then carefully rinse off the dead surplus skin with clear water.

If your skin has the tendency to become dry, rub a little Cutex Cuticle Comfort—a mild, soothing cream—around the base of your nails when you go to bed.

Have your first Cutex manicure today. Notice how short a time it takes and what

a well-groomed appearance your nails have.

Cutex, the cuticle remover, comes in 30c, 60c and \$1.25 bottles. Cutex Nail White is 30c. Cutex Nail Polish in cake, paste, powder, liquid or stick form is 30c. Cutex Cuticle Comfort is 30c. If your store hasn't what you want, order direct.

Let us send you this complete manicure set

Mail the coupon today with 15c (10c for the set and 5c for packing and postage) and we will send you a complete Individual Manicure Set, enough for at least six manicures. Send for it today. Address Northam Warren, Dept. 609, 114 West 17th Street, N. Y. City.

If you live in Canada, send 15c to MacLean, Benn & Nelson, Limited, Dept. 609, 489 St. Paul St. West, Montreal, for your sample set and get Canadian prices.



MAIL THE COUPON WITH 15c TODAY

NORTHAM WARREN

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Name

Street

City, State



This individual Manicure Set is complete. It contains enough of each Cutex product to give you at least six manicures. Send 15c for it today



I'm so glad we've given

Hinds Honey and Almond Cream

such a thorough trial this summer, for it has kept us "good looking" all the time despite this rough garden work and weather exposure. My hands and arms are quite as soft and smooth as my cheeks and you are not nearly the "Indian" of former summers. I am sure, this fall, that Hinds Cream will give my complexion the refining it will need to enable me to pass the close-up indoor inspection of all observers.

It certainly does cleanse and soften and freshen the skin in a way that makes me exceedingly happy.—You find shaving much easier since you began using Hinds Cream as an *after-shave* lotion, and that's because the Cream so quickly cools and heals the irritated skin.—We have proven that Hinds Cream is a *necessity* in our home, and not an expensive one for only a few drops are required at each application. *I shall now try the Soap and Powder.*

Hinds Cold Cream: Semi-greaseless, highly refined. For complexion and massage.

Hinds Disappearing Cream: Vanishing, greaseless, fragrant, cleansing. Relieves catchy fingers. Ideal base for face powder.

Hinds Cre-mis Soap: Adds to the skin-health and beauty of its users. Makes a rich, creamy lather in soft or alkaline water. Has unusual cleansing and softening qualities.

Hinds Cre-mis Face Powder: Wonderfully soft, delicate and clinging. White and all tints.

Hinds Cre-mis Talcum: Charms by its fragrance; purified, borated. Superfine quality. Makes velvety soft skin.

SAMPLES: Be sure to enclose stamps with your request
3 kinds of Cream 5c. Talcum 2c. Trial cake Soap, 6c.
Sample Face Powder, 2c., Trial box, 12c. Attractive Week-end Box, 35c. postpaid.

Hinds Cream Toilet Necessities are selling everywhere, or will be mailed, postpaid in U. S. A., from Laboratory.

A. S. HINDS, 220 West Street, Portland, Maine

over with a movement slow and irresistible. Within the laden cavern of the *Cerulean's* hull I heard a tremendous sighing, a long, tremulous exhalation. Without warning, instantaneously, the ropes I held to came slack, and a tossing surge picked me up and drew me away.

As I cleared my eyes, I saw Tommy still clinging to his perch but approaching me with miraculous swiftness as the ship sank headlong and drew the towering stern after it. Before I could even cry out, Tommy passed me, vanished into the gray, misty gulf. The terrific bulk of a propeller stood above me like an asterisk in my sky, turned dizzily as it was drawn past me and entered the same abyss with a sullen drumlike sound.

Tommy told me afterward that it was forty minutes before I was picked up by a boat from the destroyer that rushed to our aid. The body of Slack-Lime Jones had been found floating near by.

"I saw you go down," I replied.

"I was thinking about Slack-Lime Jones and forgot to let go," he explained sheepishly, and carefully changed the position of his broken leg. Then he defied the surgeon's orders and swung himself upright on the deck and leaned against the rail of the bunk.

"You fool!" I expostulated painfully.

Tommy didn't hear me. He balanced himself and stared upward with luminous eyes. Overhead was the tramp of heavy feet, the thud of something set down, a low-toned order. Then rang out the crisp voice of an officer, imperious and planted:

"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"

They were recommitting the body of Slack-Lime Jones to the deep.

BACK here in my flat in New York I have tried to piece together the history of Captain Jones, to clear up the mystery of his ill-successful life and bear my part, as he had put it, of "giving the news about us to the folks on the Coast." But I can fix on no climax. To the very end he seems to have been the mere sport of fortune and misfortune. He didn't even save the *Cerulean*. It seems to me that those who knew him—particularly that woman whom he never mentioned—will find little in this narrative to alter their opinion of him. I can't see Tommy Edwards' point at all. Tommy comes up once in a while and stares at me over the breakfast-table and shakes his head at my dullness.

"Hang it all, man," he protests sulkily, "he had his resurrection. Didn't you hear the commander of that overworked destroyer take ten minutes off and read the Service over him? He wasn't Slack-Lime Jones any longer. He was Captain Jones, who saved his passengers and went down with his ship."

Though I still hear in dreams at midnight the tramp of mysterious feet overhead, an inarticulate order, and wait sweating for the clear imperious voice that never sounds the words which Tommy thinks made all clear, I am unable to forget that the last thing Jones told me was: "I've done all the explaining I'm ever going to do."

Consequently I am unable to say that he justified himself against the aspersions of those who knew him most intimately.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER-TIME

(Continued from page 50)

Lelita went into the subrecesses of his mind the following day, though the tedium of the trip to the county holding William Deirson's four hundred acres—a ten-hour trip including an annoying two-hour wait at a grim red junction-station—was hardly relieved by newspapers, magazines, cigars, and chats with more or less responsive fellow-passengers.

The coaches were close and the air was cinder-filled. June had copy-catted her sister May, and the red-plush seats were militantly warm. Also the dining-service was militantly poor. Wheaton grumbled over his club-steak at noon and then indulgently reflected, as he nibbled a stale and fly-specked mint, that one could not expect the comforts of a State Street grill away from it.

Wryly he watched the landscape as it flew past—a dun, scrub-oak landscape mostly relieved only by small towns and growing fields, some green and full, but many with only weak rows of unambitious, unhealthy paler-greened stuff. And he eyed disgustedly the towns with their horrible ugly back yards, flapping lines of wash, lank chickens scooting awkwardly from the flying peril of cinders and steam, and ragged boys watching hypnotically the flying lure of cinders and steam. He thanked his lucky stars, his God and his own wits that his ways had always lain in the places of asphalt, steam laundries, chicken à la King and a familiar "L," not to mention taxies, waiters and stringed instruments. He threw one ragged boy a half-dollar; then he got into a fairly interesting conversation with a stout, sad man who gloomily hoped that certain inhabitants of the State, known as Michigan drys, would be damned hereafter, eternally and forevermore.

In the midst of this diverting chat, Wheaton's station was reached.

With relief he stretched himself as he got out at one of the painfully economical small red affairs which big, rich railroads and small, bankrupt ones alike erect so neatly. Then he stood hesitant, suitcase in large, supple, city-white hand. Deirson had arranged to meet him.

From the other side of the station a small, wizened man with sandy hair thickly streaked with gray stepped up.

"Mr. Wheaton?"

Frederick Wheaton bowed affably to indicate his identity. The man said simply, "I'll drive you out to look at the land," and led the way to a decrepit spring-board wagon and bony tired-appearing horse hitched at a line of posts on the other side of the station. Wheaton followed with wry eyes. He did not relish the prospect ahead. A thumping, jolting ride! A jumbled anatomy! But business is business, of course, and one cannot expect satin-cushioned limousines to grow on scrub oak.

"Far?" he asked briskly. "I'd like to take the midnight train back, if possible. I saw by the time-table there is one then."

The man, untying the horse, murmured no, it wasn't far. But he seemed

exceedingly taciturn and said nothing more even after he and Wheaton were sitting on the high, leaning spring seat. Wheaton saw nothing untoward in this taciturnity. In his time, he often grinned, he had met nearly every variety of human grafted from Adam's stock. Moreover he was much occupied, at first, in keeping himself secure on the swaying seat, for the horse, spurred by the whip, started off at a speed unsuspected from its gaunt appearance.

All Wheaton's anticipations were more than realized. Thumpety-bump! Bumpety-thump! He began to doubt, half irritably, half whimsically, if even four hundred excellent acres would compensate him for this ride. Finally, when he had recovered breath lost at being almost dislodged from the swaying seat at a sudden turn of the road, he remarked to the driver that surely so much speed wasn't necessary. Why the mad rush? He'd rather miss the midnight train than break his neck.

Though he shouted this remark, the man did not seem to catch it. He slapped the lines again on the bony horse's back, and said they'd soon be there.

WHATEON gave up and simply hung in that part of the State were few. They passed several miles of scrub-wooded land with no sign of house or even fence. His eyes narrowed. In a way, that was promising. Perhaps the soil was too full of something that was poor food for plant-life but nevertheless valuable. Not that he had any idea that his own inspection would inform him what the four hundred acres might yield. The sole object of his trip was to buy at the lowest price his amiable tongue could talk the wizened owner into accepting; he would take gambler's chance on the ultimate result to himself.

The road became poorer as they sped on. He shivered lightly at the idea of ever bringing his cherished roadster over it—and the roadster was some traveler, at that. But even after they had ridden for an hour he had not begun to draw any significance from the speedy, silent journey.

"Pretty poor land for crops," he smiled presently as the scrub wood continued to form the only visible decoration of nature. "I'd hate to try to make a living off of it." Nice remark this, he felt; it was true, courteous and an excellent opening for a very low offer.

It proved to be the first remark that drew more than a murmur or a grunt from his driver.

Now the man turned and looked at Wheaton; he had to cock his head upward to do it. Wheaton, looking down blandly, was slightly startled at what seemed very like flecks of pure venom in the light gray eyes upturned.

"I bet!" The two words seemed chopped out from between the man's old and imperfect teeth. "I bet you would!" he repeated deliberately, enunciation very careful. "I bet you'd hate it."

Wheaton was not uneasy at the man's odd manner. That would have been ridiculous; he had no reason to feel uneasy. But he was puzzled. Like many clever men, he was often gifted with intuition. When your success in business depends on the skill with which your tentacles of personality grip other personalities, you intuitively try to develop any intuition belonging to you. Wheaton felt vaguely that there was something in this situation that eluded him, but he presently put the man's manner down to a sour disgust with life in general. He had met such disgusted folks before.

And presently he recalled that in this part of the State lay two or three other pieces of property that had passed through his hands. Among them was the one he had sold to that fellow Peter Banns! Next county, he believed, though he was not altogether sure.

At this point he happened to glimpse the gray of a locomotive's smoke curling over to the west, and not very far to the west. Another station! In a way this seemed queer; he began to reflect that this ride was adding quite a few miles to the original one. He looked at his watch. Nearly three hours since they left the station. Surely they had made four miles an hour. He asked the man the name of the town which the curling smoke of the train located.

"Dunno," said the man briefly.

Wheaton stared hard at this. Certainly this was strange. It seemed hardly possible that a man would not know the names of the towns near his home. Wheaton became thoughtful—but not uneasy.

Nor was he sharp enough to notice that the man, with a furtive glance from under his stubby gray lashes, suddenly took on a careful expression, as though aware that he had blundered. And at once the man began to talk, grumpily but at more length than before. Wheaton was in a mood to find any talk interesting after the former silence. Three miles were covered while they debated about the respective demerits of dark clay and light clay for onion-beds. Then they drew up, rather suddenly, in the yard of a disconsolate farmhouse—four rooms with a kitchen lean-to.

"We're here," said the man simply. Wheaton clambered out of the vehicle after him. He was not aware—had not noticed—that for three miles back they had passed no other building.

Something in the triumphant glance of the man, however, impressed him. Before he could say anything, another man came out of the house—a wizened man also, slightly resembling the one who had driven Wheaton—enough to stamp them as brothers, though they were differently featured. And this last one seemed familiar to Frederick Wheaton.

They stood there silently, eying him curiously. By this time he sensed something unusual in their attitude. But—oh, afterward, Frederick Wheaton grimly grinned over that bland conceit of his—but at the moment he actually put their

silence and furtive eyings down to their natural diffidence in the presence of his superior, well-groomed city-self!

He advanced, smiling pleasantly, impatient to get to business—impatient, in a superior way of their gauche diffidence.

"Well, shall we look around your little property?"

"This way," said the one who had driven him out to the place.

WHEATON followed him past a forlorn group of shed-barns that had never been painted to a field the sandy surface of which was weakly supporting some small green bushes. Over these small bushes crawled leisurely some bright-striped bugs. Wheaton recognized them as potatoes and potato-bugs. Shiftless, he decided, were people who kept potato-bugs.

At the edge of the field the man faced him. "You said you'd hate to try to make a living off of a piece of land like this?" gesturing glumly.

Wheaton idly kicked a heap of sand. "Why, yes, I would," he agreed pleasantly.

"I'm glad you agree with us," said the man deliberately. "My brother Peter Banns and myself have tried to make one. We can't."

"Peter Banns?"—sharply. The other man had joined them. Both nodded at Wheaton.

For a moment he was too surprised for clear thought. Then he smiled grimly at realization of their trick.

"There aint no William Deirson," said the wizened man who had driven him out—Herman Banns. He grinned faintly. "Aint so cute as you thought you were, are you?"

"Well, what's up?" sharply demanded Wheaton.

"We can't sell this place," said Peter Banns languidly. "And Herman, here, has got rheumatism so bad he can't do much work. So we decided to bring you up here to help us work it. It aint no more than fair—as long as you cozened us into buying it."

"What!" exclaimed Wheaton.

"Peter and I were doing real well in our delicatessen-shop," said Herman slowly, "but we aint done well here. And we put all our extra savings into moving here, and implements and two horses. One died."

Frederick Wheaton prided himself on being not an obtuse person. He, his competitors and his friends all admitted his acumen. But several minutes were required before he could be made to understand that these two astounding individuals had planned, plotted and contrived his presence here for the sole purpose of revenge.

When he did understand, he laughed contemptuously. Not he! He would simply turn around and take the first train back to Chicago.

Well, it appeared that what seemed a simple enough matter was—not so simple as it seemed. He turned around to depart—

And then, like the subject of the song, he turned right around again! Herman Banns was holding a decrepit but vicious-looking shotgun right at Wheaton's sixth rib.

Frederick Wheaton held himself no coward. But he would have admitted at any time that he liked life as well as the next man. And it is witness to try to resist a gun-holding insane person. One must use diplomacy.

"Take that gun away!" he roared, and tried to rake around in his mind for a kernel of diplomacy.

Herman did not take it away. And so Wheaton hastily began a soothing little speech that promised almost anything. They had to be humored, these two, until he could get away.

Both Herman and Peter ignored his speech. Herman looked up calculatingly at the sky. The sun was in the west.

"There's two hours of daylight yet," said Herman. "But I guess it's too late to put him at plowing?"—questioningly of Peter.

"I guess so," said Peter in a matter-of-fact tone. "But he can hoe at the beans."

Wheaton, listening, pinched himself and soberly asked himself if he could be dreaming. It seemed impossible that Chicago, with its rights, customs and efficient police-system—a system which till that minute he had never appreciated!—were only a few railway hours away.

He, to start in that hot afternoon, and do manual labor!

TEN minutes later Wheaton understood that he was not dreaming—not a bit of it. He had raved, he had sworn, he had threatened them with arrest,—at which they smiled faintly,—he had promised by everything that he held sacred and unsacred that they would suffer for the outrage. He had used words unknown either to Daniel Webster or to *Falstaff's* landladies. But,—and his mouth fell open with the sheer wonder of it, the impossibility of what was possible!—but the end was that he, hoe in hand, prodded by Herman and the gun, made his way to a patch of beans—beans which did not bush themselves in low but vigorous erectness, but lay limply close to the sandy soil and had leafage too pale for bean-health.

He shouted truthfully as he went: "I never hoed!"

"I'll show you how," said Peter coldly. "It don't call for much intellect." Peter showed him, and warned him not to cut beans instead of weeds. "Though," he added glumly, "I dunno as it would matter much. About all the beans we'll get off this patch'll be a pint." He went away to unhitch and feed the horse.

Wheaton mechanically made a few angry passes with the hoe. Then, flushed with pure rage, he paused. He looked around. There was little in sight but fields and patches of wood, more or less scrubby. If any other residences lay in that part of the State, the woods or the rises of ground concealed them. Certainly the region was not thickly populated. State Street flashed before him. He had never before realized how beautifully populous was that narrow strip of land. Then—

He saw that neither Peter nor Herman Banns was in sight. He glanced all around sharply and then decided to "beat it."

Well, he "beat it" just eight yards. Then Peter, and gun, appeared from behind the barn and called him to halt.

Wrathfully he came back. His wrath,

too, was deepened by a sense of the incongruity between his large build and the wizened small man commanding him.

"Now, see here," he began in a would-be reasoning tone, "you must know this is unwise. If you really shot me, you would be arrested, put in jail—maybe hanged!" He paused for the words to take effect. Herman had come from the barn.

"Oh, I dunno," said Peter calmly. "I kill you, here's Herman to swear it was an accident. But I aint intending to kill you. I'd just maim you."

Wheaton's body stiffened involuntarily.

"But we aint inhuman," put in Herman politely. "We'd get a doctor. Of course, if you contradicted our story about it being an accident, why," he sighed glumly, "why, we'd just have to tell the truth."

Wheaton glared triumphantly. "You do see, then!"

Neither brother took the triumph to heart, it seemed.

"Yes, we'd tell the truth," said Peter, "all the truth. And I bet it would get in the newspapers. I bet there'd be a lot of type spread about the rascally real estate man who got shot over one of his deals."

Wheaton grinned faintly. Wheaton stiffened. Only a few minutes ago he had said to himself that this little experience mustn't be confided to anyone in Chicago.

Peter calmly went on: "And I bet a lot of folks would enjoy reading about how you put off a worthless piece of land on two plumb city fools. I bet a lot of folks would think it was a—" He paused.

Wheaton mentally winced. He could not help it. There breathes no modern man with soul too dead to quail at the autocracy of the daily press. He could supply the word at which the man paused—shame! Plenty would deem it a shame.

But it seemed that wasn't the word Peter had in mind.

"I bet lots of folks would think it a joke if we shot you, after we'd coaxed you out here and made you work on the land that you represented as being"—here he quoted from memory and Wheaton remembered—"a boon to some tired city soul!" Well,—grimly,—"our souls were tired, all right, but this wasn't much of a boon."

NOW, Frederick Wheaton had a very excellent command of his full, bland countenance. He had taken pains to acquire such a command. He often congratulated himself and boasted to his intimates that little could disturb this carefully acquired facial serenity. But now he was horrified to feel it giving way beneath his rising feelings—like quicksand under a mule's heels.

Oh, he knew! He knew that not for a very, very large amount of cash would he see himself held up to judgment and ridicule in the public press. One can live anything down, even ridicule, but it takes time. His gray eyes narrowed grimly. There were the Walton brothers, who had a competing suite on the same floor as his offices. He could see them read, then smile enjoyably across the mahogany desk at each other. And Marcia London—she was entirely too intelligent not to

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understand. Oh, very well indeed would she understand!

But he attempted to put up a fair bluff. "Well, you two better think carefully. Jail is—jail. And whatever happened to me, you know well enough that jail would happen to you."

Peter turned, hand on the stock of his gun, and looked dourly over the forty-four acres. Herman, feed-pail in hand, turned and looked sourly over the same. "We've been here four years," said Peter simply. "We, as I said, put all our cash into this. The first year we scrimped on food and everything, expecting the crops would keep us comfortable afterward."

"But they didn't," said Herman glumly.

"But we didn't complain the second year, thinking maybe we hadn't worked the land right," went on Peter.

"But we'd worked it well enough—for what it was as land," said Herman.

"I dunno as you would believe what I could tell you about these four years," finished Peter coldly. "But I can tell you this: don't think any talk about jail can fret me and Herman."

"No, I dunno as jail would seem like such a bad place to us," contributed Herman with a bitterness that carried conviction. "So now—"

Then—it seemed incredible—Frederick Wheaton was again directed to that bean-patch. And in that bean-patch, until sundown, he angrily made passes at the weeds with a hoe.

Then, when the sun had gone down so far that the evening star shone goldenly against the beautiful evening sky, he was permitted to cast down the hoe and milk the cow. Failing—not unnaturally, as he had never milked a cow—he was permitted to abandon her, and while Peter contemptuously filled the pail, he shoveled manure out of the barn under the supervision of Herman, who carried a lantern.

Then all three went into the house and had supper. Wheaton saw a sunbonnet and a faded gingham apron hanging on a nail, but his hosts vouchsafed no information concerning other members of the Banns family, and he neither saw nor heard anyone except the two wizened brothers.

Supper was eaten at nine o'clock. Wheaton was angry, hot, perspiring—his shirt clung to his skin—and tired. But he was also hungry. Nine hours had elapsed since his luncheon on the dinner, and fastidious as he was, he could have eaten more boiled potatoes, salt meat and wild strawberries than Peter allowed him. But he was not given any more. He was taciturnly shown a place to sleep—a cot in the bare room nearest the lean-to kitchen. He lay down wrathfully, without undressing.

"Better take your clothes off," said Herman with a faint grin.

"Herman don't sleep much nights," explained Peter, "on account of his rheumatism."

Wheaton understood their undermeaning. But, hopeful, he did not undress.

His hopes were spoiled. As long as he lay awake, he saw Herman sitting there patiently. He finally went to sleep, against his will. At dawn Peter woke him for breakfast and for—work. It may be put down that Wheaton was surprised to

learn that dawn came so early in the day. That morning he hoed more beans.

At seven-thirty Herman had neatly shot a sparrow on the wing.

"If Herman shoots you," casually observed Peter, "he'll aim at your kneecap. That won't kill you. But I've heard that split kneecaps ain't easy mended."

"Once I knew a man with a broken kneecap," mused Herman. "I b'lieve the doctor put in a silver one instead. But it never worked like his own bone cap."

Wheaton listened in grim silence. At eight-fifty he offered to pay back what they had paid for the place. They refused.

"We've worked like dogs for four years," said Herman. "We would have taken the money awhile back—when we wrote you and you didn't answer."

"As I knew you wouldn't answer! So I sent the first one signed William Deirson at the same time," said Peter exasperately.

"Now we'll enjoy seeing you work for a few weeks—hard," said Herman coldly.

Then Wheaton was put behind the horse and plow, and for the remainder of that hot June day—well, if it was not actually plowing that he effected, he at least guided the horse and implement, under Peter's glum supervision, up and down and across the field.

"And in one way you're lucky," commented Peter during the day. "It's sandy soil. If it was clay, you'd find it harder work. Next week we'll get at the clayey part of the farm."

"Next week!" fiercely muttered Wheaton, mopping his forehead.

"You'll be here still," assured Herman.

AND it came to pass that the next week Wheaton was indeed still there.

Afterward it seemed incredible, even to himself. And he never even attempted to win credence from anyone else. He kept mute about the fact that two small, sickly, wizened men kept him, of larger build and brain, so that he could not get away. There came to be a sort of uncanniness about their ingenuity and power. He admitted to himself his near-cowardice; but either Herman Banns or Peter Banns, night and day, contrived to keep a gun pointed ominously at either his left or right knee. Oh, in retrospect it seemed strange that he, bigger, cleverer, had not contrived to jump at the two small men and overpower them—very strange. But at the time it had been quite impossible. They kept the advantage of him at every turn, at every minute, at every occasion. Hate seemed to have given them a devilish cunning. The feeling grew upon him, as one day gave way to a second and a third, that they would really relish making him a cripple for life. And Wheaton belonged to that class of men who would far rather lose life than limb.

All the long hot afternoon of that second day he wielded the hoe in the bean-patch. At night he was apoplectic with rage and wet with perspiration. His silk shirt lay like a washrag on him. And his feet, unused to such treatment as an ordinary sand-field gives, had swollen. But they were not inhuman, they explained kindly, and they pointed out a tin pan into which he might pump water and soak them.

Again he tried to hold himself awake. Again weariness forced his eyes shut while Herman sat on guard. Again he was roused at four o'clock.

And the third day he was ordered to the potato-patch, to pick off the potato-bugs—into a tin pan, so that they could be burned.

Picking off potato-bugs is not the hardest work in the world, but several straight hours of it is not enjoyable, especially when your large, soft waist is not used to long bending. Wheaton picked the striped yellow-and-brown things—and picked them, and picked them. He could do no less; Herman with the gun was right behind him.

And from his fragmentary knowledge of rural pursuits, Wheaton finally demanded angrily: "Why don't you use Paris green? This hand work is unnecessary, you idiots!"

"We didn't have enough money to buy Paris green," coldly informed Herman. "That's why we didn't use it this year. There's one under that leaf you missed."

Wheaton got the bug-matron under the leaf and remarked loftily: "Maybe if you'd planted good potatoes, you'd have better-looking plants."

"The potatoes planted were good enough," said Herman.

"Well, then, your land simply needs some fertilizer. Tell you what," conciliatingly, "I'll send you some—"

"The land needs," said Herman dryly, "nitrogen, lime, phosphorus, calcium and about fourteen other things that land ought to have. For what you'd have to pay for fertilizer, we could buy a good farm somewhere."

"I'll pay you back what you—"

"Not now. Too late," said Herman. "We like to see you work."

Wheaton went on working till the sun like a red ball, rolled warmly down over the western rim of horizon. His feet were blistered; so were his hands, a day later. And one night he could not sleep from the ache of strained tendons. His clothes, all that he brought, became saturated with perspiration. His neck and face and forearms were sun-peeled, and his eyes bulged with rage. But he stayed on.

One day, two days, three, four, five, six, seven—

ON the eighth, Mrs. Peter Banns came home. She had been away nursing a sister who had typhoid. She was a little, faded, washed-out woman. And she was frightened and horrified and panic-stricken, almost, over the doings of her husband and her brother-in-law during her absence. She plaintively told the foot-swollen, blistered, weary, back-aching (he secretly feared that his back was strained beyond recovery), perspiration-rancid, wild-eyed Wheaton that he was at perfect liberty to leave the place whenever he desired.

It seemed that Peter and Herman had not expected her back for another week. It also seemed that she, small, plaintive, washed-out, ruled them quite as firmly as they had ruled Wheaton.

She scolded them fervidly! "Aint you two 'shamed! How do you s'pose I'd feel with you taken to jail? And this is just work!"

Wheaton straightened his aching back

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and regarded them, Peter and Herman, autocratically. But he spoke with lofty kindness to the small washed-out woman whose scolding was quavering into sobs.

"Do not worry, madam. Richly as they deserve it, I shall not punish them."

"Good reason why!" muttered Herman. "You're afraid it'd git in the papers if you did."

The little washed-out woman glanced at Wheaton and then turned reproachfully to Peter and Herman again. But if Frederick Wheaton expected, as he may have expected, that she was about to voice a nice appreciation of his magnanimity, he was taken aback. Said she in low, hurt voice: "Just because he was a rascal is no reason for you two to act rascally!"

"Madam!" protested Wheaton.

"Aw, come on," snapped Peter. "We want to get rid of you."

Perhaps it was from a discreet desire to be at hand lest Wheaton forget himself and talk to the station-agent or any other individual to be met before a rail-way-coach swallowed him again, that Peter sulkily harnessed the bony horse and drove him to the station—a station several miles nearer the Banns abode, by the way, than the distant one at which Wheaton, arriving, had been directed to alight. There was no denying that in Peter and Herman Banns two excellent international plotters had been wasted.

Onto the train stepped Wheaton—silently. Off drove Peter—silently. On a red-plush seat, dusty and militantly hot, restfully sprawled Wheaton. He pulled the shade down to shut out the sun. This he did apprehensively, as though he had dreading and could not forget the danger of a sunstroke. At the careless touch on his shoulder of the train-butcher he

jumped suspiciously—this is a cruel world, and you never know whom you can safely trust. Every once in a while he crossed his feet gingerly. Every once in a while he uncrossed them gingerly. They were larger, by several sizes, than when he had left his office several days back; and they ached. But in spite of their aching, he enjoyed presently a fairly tough steak in the diner. The Banns fare at no time had leaned to abundance. Wheaton could not exactly understand how an appetite could swell simultaneously with one's aching feet.

Arrived in Chicago, he as unostentatiously as possible sought the seclusion of his rooms, where he fairly jumped out of his present attire into clean, fresh, perspirationless clothes. And he surveyed grimly the articles of wardrobe that he had taken to Michigan. Ruined!

After some sixteen hours' sleep Wheaton went back to life as it had been. And in the course of the next afternoon he met, in the corridor of his office-building, Marcia London. Now, it may have been only an unexplainable psychological reason that caused Wheaton to shudder irresponsibly at sight of her. It was surely only chance that she should happen to be wearing a bright brown striped charmeuse sports-suit—the same stripings of brown that fat, self-important potato-bugs much affect. It was quite unjust and obstinate for Wheaton to feel a certain distaste for anyone addicted to bright brown clothes. Also it was unbusinesslike.

But the fact remains that he deliberately went into his own office, and ignoring his stenographer, called the Café Dan-sant. And when Lelita le Lonne answered

him, he said gently: "I'm back, girly. Meet me—"

"You never even sent me a postcard while you were gone!"

"Lelita, I never even saw a mail-box while I was away!"

"I dare say. I guess you could have found one if you'd wanted to!" Her voice was low and spiritless.

"Tired, dear girl?" he asked oddly. "I—I thought a lot about you while I was gone. I—I wondered if your feet ached as much—well, I wondered if you were tired."

"I'm always tired," she answered tonelessly. "I know you think I'm pretending. But when you dance hours and hours every day in the week—"

"I—I dare say," said Frederick Wheaton uncomfortably. And then he added sheepishly: "By the way, Lelita, remember about that bungalow with a garden behind it? D'ye know, I've got a hankering to see how beans would grow on a bit of decent soil. A plot of land that—"

"Oh, do you mean it? Oh, don't tease me if you aren't in earnest!" wailed Lelita, who never would have made any kind of a plotter and who would have been absolutely useless in a poker-game. "I'll be a good wife—really I will!"—excitedly. "I know I'm shallow and not very clever, but—"

Frederick Wheaton flushed uncomfortably and went on briskly, as though to hide emotion with sham emotion: "But we won't have a large plot of garden," he said decided, "—just a small one. I—I have a prejudice against long rows of beans or potatoes."

Rather absently he fingered the pocket where his check-book reposited. The last stub bore the name of Banns.

THE CUP OF FURY

(Continued from page 33)

was restored to equanimity by the incursion of Polly Widdicombe and her husband. Polly was one of the best-dressed women in the world. Her husband had the look of the husband of the best-dressed woman in the world. Polly had a wiry voice, and made no effort to soften it, but she was tremendously smart. She giggled all the time and set people off in her vicinity, though her talk was rarely witty on its own account.

Laughter rippled all through her life. She talked of her griefs in a plucky, riant way, making eternal fun of herself as a giddy fool. She carried a delightful jocundity wherever she went. She was aristocratic, too, in the postgraduate degree of being careless, reckless, superior even to good manners. She had a good heart, and amiable feelings; these made manners enough.

She had lineage as well, for her all-American family ran straight back into the sixteen hundreds, which was farther than many a duke dared trace his line. She had traveled the world; she had danced with kings, and had made two popes laugh and tweak her pointed chin. She wasn't afraid of anybody, not even of peasants and servants, or of being friendly with them, or angry with them.

Marie Louise adored her. She felt that

it would make no difference to Polly's affection if she found out all there was to find out about Marie Louise. And yet Polly's friendship did not have the dull certainty of indestructibility. Marie Louise knew that one word wrong or one act out of key might end it forever, and then Polly would be her loud and ardent enemy, and laugh at her instead of for her. Polly could hate as briskly as she could love.

She was in one of her vitriolic moods now because of the *Lusitania*.

"I shouldn't have come to-night," she said, "except that I want to talk to a lot of people about Germany. I want to tell everybody I know how much I loathe 'em all. 'The Hymn of Hate' is a lullaby to what I feel."

Polly was also conducting a glorious war with Lady Clifton-Wyatt. Lady C.-W. had bullied everybody in London so successfully that she went straight up against Polly Widdicombe without a tremor. She got what-for, and everybody was delighted. The two were devoted enemies from then on, and it was beautiful to see them come together.

Lady Clifton-Wyatt followed Polly up the receiving line to-night and invited a duel, but Polly was in no humor for a fight with anybody but Germans. She

turned her full-orbed back on Lady C.-W. and, so to speak, gnashed her shoulder-blades at her. Lady C.-W. passed by without a word, and Marie Louise was glad to hide behind Polly, for Marie Louise was mortally afraid of her.

She saw the American greet her as if he had met her before. Lady Clifton-Wyatt was positively polite to him. He must be a very great man.

She heard Lady Clifton-Wyatt say something about: "How is the new ship coming on?" and the American said: "She's doing as well as could be expected."

So he was a shipbuilder. Marie Louise thought that his must be a heartbreaking business in these days when ships were being slaughtered in such numbers. She asked Polly and her husband if they knew him or his name.

Widdicombe shook his head. Polly laughed at her husband: "How do you know? He might be your own mother, for all you can tell. Put on your distance-glasses, you poor fish." She turned to Marie Louise. "You know how near-sighted Tom is."

"An excellent fault in a man," said Marie Louise.

"Oh, I don't know," said Polly. "You can't trust even the blind ones. And you'll notice that when Tom comes to one

of these décolleté dinners, he wears his reading-glasses."

All this time Widdicombe was taking out his distance-glasses, taking off his reading-glasses and pouching them and putting them away, and putting on his distance-glasses, and from force of habit putting their pouch away. Then he stared at Davidge, took off his distance-glasses, found the case with difficulty, put them up, pocketed them and stood blearing into space while he searched for his reading-glasses, found them, put the case back in his pocket and saddled his nose with the lenses.

Polly waited in a mockery of patience and said:

"Well, after all that, what?"

"I don't know him," said Widdicombe.

It was a good deal of an anticlimax to so much work.

Polly said: "That proves nothing. Tom's got a near-memory, too. The man's a pest. If he didn't make so much money, I'd abandon him on a doorstep."

That was Polly's form of baby-talk. Everybody knew how she doted on Tom: she called him names the way one scolds a pet dog. Widdicombe had the helpless manner of one, and was always at heel with Polly. But he was a Titan financially, and he was signing his name now to munitions-contracts as big as national debts.

Marie Louise was summoned from the presence of the Widdicomes by one of Lady Webling's most mysterious glances, to meet a newcomer whom Lady Webling evidently regarded as a special treasure. Lady Webling was as wide as a screen, and she could always form a sort of alcove in front of her by turning her back on the company. She made such a nook now and taking Marie Louise's hand in hers, put it in the hand of the tall and staring man whose very look Marie Louise found invasive.

His handclasp was somehow like an illicit caress. How strange it is that with so much modesty going about, people should be allowed to wear their hands naked! The fashion of the last few years compelling the leaving off of gloves was not really very nice. Marie Louise realized it for the first time. Her fastidious right hand tried to escape from the embrace of the stranger's fingers, but they clung devilishly, and Lady Webling's soft cushion palm was there conniving in the abduction. And her voice had a wheedling tone:

"This is my dear Nicky, I have spoken of so much. Mr. Easton, you know."

"Oh, yes," said Marie Louise.

"Be very nice to him," said Lady Webling. "He is taking you out to dinner."

At that moment the butler appeared, solemn as a long-awaited priest, and there was such a slow crystallization as follows a cry of "Fall in!" to weary soldiers. The guests were soon in double file and on the march to the battlefield with the cooks.

Nicky Easton still had Marie Louise's hand; he had carried it up into the crook of his right arm and kept his left hand over it for guard. A lady can hardly wrench loose from such an attention, but Marie Louise abhorred it.

Nicky treated her as a sort of possession, and she resented his courtesies. He

began too soon with compliments. One hates to have even a bunch of violets jabbed into one's nose with the command "Smell!"

She disliked his accent, too. There was a Germanic something in it as faint as the odor of high game. It was a time when the least hint of Teutonism carried the stench of death to British nostrils.

Lady Webling and Sir Joseph were known to be of German birth, and their phrases carried the tang, but Sir Joseph had become a naturalized citizen ages ago and had won respect and affection a decade back. His lavish use of his money for charities and for great industries had won him his knighthood, and while there was a certain sniff of suspicion in certain fanatic quarters at the mention of his name, those who knew him well had so long ago forgotten his alien birth that they forgave it him now.

As for Marie Louise, she no longer heeded the Prussian acid of his speech. She was as used to it as to his other little mannerisms. She did not think of the old couple as fat and awkward. She did not analyze their attributes or think of their features in detail. She thought of them simply as them. But Easton was new; he brought in a subtle whiff of the hated Germany that had done the *Lusitania* to death.

The fate of the ship made the dinner resemble a solemn wake. The triumphs of the chef were but funeral baked meats. The feast was brilliant and large and long, and it seemed criminal to see such waste of provender when so much of the world was hungry. The talk was almost all of the *Lusitania* and the deep damnation of her taking off. Many of the guests had crossed the sea in her graceful shell, and they felt a personal loss as well as a bitterness of rage at the worst of the German sea-crimes.

Davidge was seated remotely from Marie Louise, far down the flowery lane of the table. She could not see him at all, for the candles and the roses. Just once she heard his voice in a lull. Its twang carried it all the way up the alley:

"A man that would kill a passengership would shoot a baby in its cradle. When you think how long it takes to build a ship, how much work she represents, how sweet she is when she rides out and all that—by G-osh, there's no word mean enough for the skoundrels. There's nothing they wont do now—absolutely nothing."

She heard no more of him, and she did not see him again that night. She forgot him utterly. Even the little wince of distress he gave her by his provincialism was forgotten in the anguish her foster-parents caused her.

For Marie Louise had a strange, an odious sensation that Sir Joseph and Lady Webling were not quite sincere in their expressions of horror and grief over the finished epic, the *Lusitania*. It was not for lack of language, for they used the strongest words they could find. But there was missing the subtle somewhat of intonation and gesture that actors call sincerity. Marie Louise knew how hard it is even for a great actor to express his simplest thoughts with conviction. No, it was when he expressed them best that he was least convincing, since an emotion

that can be adequately presented is not a very big emotion; at least it does not overwhelm the soul. Inadequacy, helplessness, gaucherie, prove that the feelings are bigger than the eloquence. They "get across the footlights" between each player on the human stage and his audience.

Yes, that was it: Sir Joseph and Lady Webling were protesting too well and too much. Marie Louise hated herself for even the disloyalty of such a criticism of them, but she was repelled somehow by such rhetoric, and she liked far better the dour silence of old Mr. Verrinder. He looked a bishop who had got into a layman's evening dress by mistake. He was something very impressive and influential in the Government, nobody knew just what.

Marie Louise liked still better than Verrinder's silence the distracted muttering and stammering of a young English officer, Philip Hawdon, who was maltreating his bread and throwing in champagne with an apparent eagerness for the inevitable result. Before he grew quite too thick to be understood, he groaned to himself, but loudly enough to be heard the whole length and breadth of the table: "I remember readin' about old Greek witch name Circe—changed human beings into shape of swine. I wonder who turned those German swine into the shape of human beings."

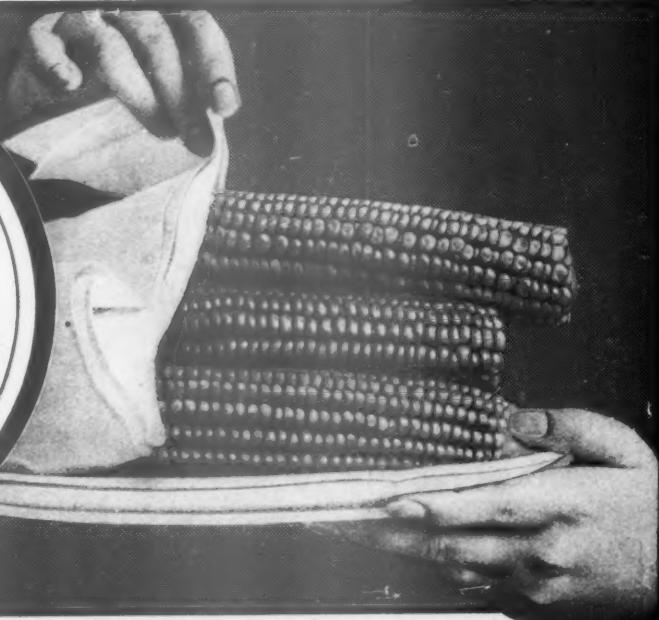
Marie Louise noted that Lady Webling was shocked—by the vulgarity no doubt. "Swine" do not belong in dining-room language—only in the platters or the chairs. Marie Louise caught an angry look also in the eye of Nicholas Easton, though he too had been incisive in his comments on the theme of the dinner. His English had been uncannily correct, his phrases formed with the exactitude of a book on syntax or the dialogue of a gentleman in a novel. But he also was drinking too much, and as his lips fuddled he had trouble with a very formal "without which." It resulted first as "veetowit veech" then as "whidhout witch." He made it on the third trial.

Marie Louise, turning her eyes his way in wonder, encountered two other glances moving in the same direction. Lady Webling looked anxious, alarmed. Mr. Verrinder's gaze was merely studious. Marie Louise felt an odd impression that Lady Webling was sending a kind of heliographic warning, while the look of Mr. Verrinder was like a searchlight that studies and registers, then moves away.

Marie Louise disliked Easton more and more, but Lady Webling kept recommending him with her solicitous manner toward him. She made several efforts, too, to shift the conversation from the *Lusitania*; but it swung always back. Much bewilderment was expressed because the ship was not protected by a convoy. Many wondered why she was where she was when she was struck, and how she came to take that course at all.

Lady Clifton-Wyatt, who had several friends on board and was uncertain of their fate, was unusually fierce in blaming the Government. She always blamed it for everything when it was Liberal. And now she said:

"It was nothing short of murder to have left the poor ship to steal in by itself



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"IT'S TOASTED."

CIGARETTES

**It's
toasted**

without convoy. Whatever was the Admiralty thinking of? If the Cabinet doesn't fall for this, we might as well give up."

The Liberals present acknowledged her notorious prejudices with a sigh of resignation. But Lieutenant Hawdon rolled a foggy eye and a foggy tongue in answer:

"Darling lady, there must have been warships waitin' to convoy the *Lusitania*; but she didn't come to rendezvous because why? Because some filthy Zherman gave her a false wireless and led her into a trap."

This amazing theory with its drunken inspiration of plausibility startled the whole throng. It set eyeballs rolling in all directions like a break in a game of pool. Everybody stared at Hawdon, then at somebody else. Marie Louise's racing gaze noted that Mr. Verrinder's eyes went slowly about again, studying everybody except Hawdon.

Lady Clifton-Wyatt's eyes as they ran simply expressed a disgust that she put into words with her usual frankness:

"Don't be more idiotic than necess'ry, my dear Phil; there are secret codes, you know."

"Secret codes I know? Secret codes the Germans know—that's what you mean, sweetheart. I don't know one little secret, but Huns—do you know how many thousand Germans there are loose in England—do you?"

Lady Clifton-Wyatt shook her head impatiently. "I haven't the faintest notion. Far more than I wish, I'm sure."

"I hope so, unless you wish fifty thousand. And God knows how many more. And I'm not allthung to Germans in disguise, naturalized Germans—quinine pills with a little coating. I'm not referring to you, of course, Sir Joseph. Greares' respect for you. Ever' body has. You have done all you could to overcome the fatal error of your parents. You're a splen'ld gen'l'man. You're 'xception proves rule. Even Germans can't all be perf'ly rotten."

"Thank you, Philip, thank you," said Sir Joseph with a natural embarrassment.

Marie Louise noted the slight difference between the English "Thank you" and Sir Joseph's "Thang gyou."

Then Lady Webling's eyes went around the table catching up the women's eyes and forms, and she led them in a troop from the embarrassing scene. She brought the embarrassment with her to the drawing-room, where the women sat about smoking miserably and waiting for the men to come forth and take them home.

CHAPTER III

THERE must have been embarrassment enough left to go round the dining-table too, for in an unusually brief while the men flocked into the drawing-room. And they began to plead engagements in offices or homes or Parliament.

It was not yet ten o'clock when the last of the guests had gone, except Nicholas Easton. And Sir Joseph took him into his own study. Easton walked a trifle too solemnly straight, as if he had set himself an imaginary chalk-line to follow. He jostled against the door, and as he closed it, swung with it uncertainly.

Lady Webling asked almost at once, with a nod of the head in the direction of the study door:

"Well, my dear child, what do you think of Nicky?"

"Oh, I don't know. He's nice, but—"

"We're very fond of him, Sir Joseph and I—and we do hope you will be."

Marie Louise wondered if they were going to select a husband for her. It was a dreadful situation, because there was no compulsion except the compulsion of obligation. They never gave her a chance to do anything for them; they were always doing things for her. What an ingrate she would be to rebuff their first real desire! And yet to marry a man she felt such antipathy for—surely there could be some less hateful way of obliging her benefactors. She felt like a castaway on a desert, and there was something of the wilderness in the immensity of the drawing-room with its crowds of untenanted divans and of empty chairs drawn into groups as the departed guests had left them.

Lady Webling stood close to Marie Louise and pressed for an answer.

"You don't really dislike Nicky, do you?"

"N-o-o. I've not known him long enough to dislike him very well."

She tried to soften the rebuff with a laugh, but Lady Webling sighed profoundly and smothered her disappointment in a fond good night. She smothered the great child too in a hugely buxom embrace. When Marie emerged, she was suddenly reminded that she had not yet spoken to Lady Webling of Fräulein Ernst's attack on the children's souls. She spoke now.

"There's one thing, Mamma, I've been wanting to tell you all evening. Please don't let it distress you, but really I'm afraid you'll have to get rid of Fräulein."

Lady Webling's voluminous yawn was stricken midway into a gasp. Marie Louise told her the story of the diabolical prayer. Lady Webling took the blow without reeling, but hardly without smiling. She expressed shock, but again expressed it too perfectly.

She promised to "reprimand the foolish old soul."

"To reprimand her!" Marie Louise cried. "You won't send her away?"

"Send her away where, my child? Where should we send the poor thing? But I'll speak to her very sharply. It was outrageous of her. What if the children should say such things before other people? It would be frightful! Thank you for telling me, my dear. And now I'm for bed! And you should be. You look quite worn out. Coming up?"

Lady Webling laughed and glanced at the study door, implying and rejoicing in the implication that Marie Louise was lingering for a last word with Easton.

Really she was trying to avoid climbing the long stairs with Lady Webling's arm about her. For the first time in her life she distrusted the perfection of the old soul's motives. She felt like a Judas when Lady Webling offered her cheek for another good-night kiss. Then she pretended to read a book while she listened for Lady Webling's last puff as she made the top step.

At once she poised for flight. But the study door opened, and Easton came out. He was bending down to murmur into Sir Joseph's downcast countenance. Easton was saying with a tremulous emotion: "This is the beginning of the end of England's control of the sea."

Marie Louise almost felt that there was a quiver of eagerness rather than of dread in his tone, or that the dread was the awe of a horrible hope.

Sir Joseph was brooding and shaking his head. He seemed to start as he saw Marie Louise. But he smiled on her dolefully and said:

"You are not gone to bed yet?"

She shook her head and sorrowed over him with a sudden rush of gratitude to his defense. She did not reward Easton's smile with any favor, though he widened his eyes in admiration.

Sir Joseph said: "Good night, Nicky. It is long before I see you some more."

Nicholas nodded: "But I shall see Miss Marie Louise quite soon now."

This puzzled Marie Louise. She pondered it while Nicky bent and kissed her hand, heaved a guttural, gluttonous "ah!" and went his way.

IT was nearly a week later before she had a clue to the riddle. Then Sir Joseph came home to luncheon unexpectedly. He had an envelope with him, sealed with great red buttons of wax. He asked Marie Louise into his office and said with an almost stealthy importance:

"My darling, I have a little favor to ask of you. Sometimes, you see, when I am having a big dealing on the Stock Exchange, I do not like that everybody knows my business. Too many people wish to know all I do, so they can be doing the same. What everybody knows helps nobody. It is my wish to get this envelope to a man without somebody finding out something, understand?"

"Yes, Papa!" Marie Louise answered with the utmost confidence that what he did was good and wise and straight. She experienced a qualm when Sir Joseph explained that Nicky was the man. She wondered why he did not come to the house. Then she rebuked herself for presuming to question Sir Joseph's motives. He had never been anything but good to her, and he had been so whole-heartedly good that for her to give thought-room to a suspicion of him was heinous.

He had business secrets and stratagems of tremendous financial moment. She had known him to work up great drives on the market and to use all sorts of people to prepare his attacks. She did not understand big business methods. She regarded them all with childlike bewilderment. When, then, Sir Joseph asked her to meet Nicky as if casually in Regent's Park, and convey the envelope from her hand to Nicky's without anyone's witnessing the transfer, she felt the elation of a child intrusted with an important errand. So she walked all the way to Regent's Park with the long strides of a young woman out for a constitutional. She found a bench where she was told to, and sat down to bask in the spring air, and wait.

By and by Easton sauntered along, lifted his hat to Marie Louise and made



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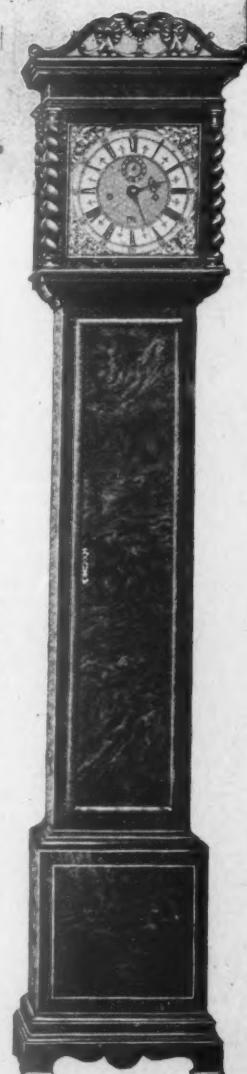
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WALTHAM

THE WORLD'S WATCH OVER TIME

a great show of surprise. She rose and gave him her hand. She had taken the precaution to wear gloves—also she had the envelope in her hand. She left it in Nicky's. He smuggled it into his coat pocket, and murmuring, "So sorry I can't stop!" lifted his hat and hurried off.

Marie Louise sat down again, and after a time resumed her constitutional.

Sir Joseph was full of thanks when she saw him at night. Some days later he asked Marie Louise to meet Nicky outside a Bond Street shop.

This sort of meeting took place several times in several places. When the crowds were too great or a Bobby loitered about, Nicky would murmur to Marie Louise that she had better start home. He would take her arm familiarly—and the transfer of the parcel would be deftly achieved.

This messenger service went on for several weeks. Sir Joseph apologized for the trouble he gave Marie Louise. He seemed to be sincerely unhappy about it, and his little eyes in their fat watery bags peered at her with a tender regret and an ulterior regret as well.

He explained a dozen times that he sent her because it was such an important business and he had no one else to trust. And Marie Louise, for all her anxiety, was sadly glad of his confidence, regarded it as sacred and would not violate it so much as to make the least effort to learn what messages she was carrying. Nothing, of course, would have been easier than to pry open one of these envelopes. Sometimes the lapel was hardly sealed. But she would as soon have peeked into a bathroom.

LATE in June the Weblings left town and settled in the great country seat Sir Joseph had bought from a bankrupt American who had bought it from nobility gone back to humility. Here life was life. There were forests and surreptitious pheasants, deer that would almost but never quite come to call, unseen nightingales that sang from lofty nave and transept like cherubim all wings and voice.

The house was usually full of guests, but they were careful not to intrude upon their hosts nor their hosts upon them. The life was like life at a big hotel. There was always a little gambling to be had, tennis, golf, or music, or a quiet chat, gardens to stroll and sniff or grub in, horses to ride, motors at beck and call, solitude or company.

Lady Clifton-Wyatt came down for a week-end and struck up a great friendship with the majestic Mrs. Prothero from Washington, D. C., so grand a lady that even Lady C.-W. as a bit in awe of her, so gracious a personage that even Lady C.-W. could not pick a quarrel with her.

Mrs. Prothero gathered Marie Louise under her wing and urged her to visit her when she came to America. But Polly Widdicombe had already pledged Marie Louise to make her home her own on that side of the sea. Polly came down too, and had "the time of her young life" in doing a bit of the women's war-work that became the beautiful fashion of the time. The justification of it was that it released men for the trenches, but Polly insisted that it was shamefully good sport.

She and Marie Louise went about in

breeches and shirts and worked like hostlers about the stables and in the paddocks, breaking colts and mucking out stalls. They donned the blouses and boots of peasants, and worked in the fields with rake and hoe and harrow. They even tried the plow, but they followed it too literally, and the scallopy furrows they drew across the fields made the yokels laugh or grieve according to their natures.

The photographers were alive to the piquancy of these revelations, and portraits of Marie Louise in knickers and puttees, and armed with agricultural weapons, appeared in the pages of all the weeklies along with other aristocrats and commoners. Some of these even reached America.

HERE was just one flaw for Rosalind in this "As You Like It" life and that was the persistence of the secret association with Nicky. It was the strangest of clandestine affairs.

Marie Louise had always liked to get out alone in a saddle or behind the wheel of a runabout, and Sir Joseph, when he came up from town, fell into the habit of asking her once in a while to take another little note to Nicky.

She found him in out-of-the-way places. He would step from a clump of bushes by the road and hail her car, or she would overtake him and offer him a lift to his inn; or she would take horse and gallop across country and find him awaiting her in some lonely avenue or in the twist of a ravine.

He was usually so preoccupied and furtive that he made no proffer of courtship; but once when he seemed peculiarly triumphant, he rode so close to her that their knees girded and their spurs clashed, and he tried to clip her in his arms. She gathered her horse and let him go, and he plunged ahead so abruptly that the clinging Nicky dragged Marie Louise from her saddle backward. He tried to swing her to the pommel of his own, but she fought herself free and came to the ground and was almost trampled. She was so rumped and so furious and he so frightened that he left her and spurred after her horse, brought him back and bothered her no more that day.

"If you ever annoy me again," she said, "it'll be the last you'll see of me."

She was too useful to be treated as a mere beauty, and she had him cowed. But the note-carrying went on, and she could not escape from the suspicion or its shadow of disgrace. Like a hateful buzzard it was always somewhere in her sky.

Once the suspicion had domiciled itself in her world, it was incessantly confirmed by the minutiae of everyday existence. The interchange of messages with Nicky Easton grew inexplicable on any other ground. The theory of secret financial dealings looked ludicrous; or if the dealings were financial, they were in the line of the trading with the enemy that was so much discussed in the papers.

She felt that she had been conniving in one of the spy-plots that all the Empire was talking about. She grew afraid to the last degree of fear. She saw herself on the scaffold. She resolved to carry no more messages. But the next request of Sir Joseph's found her complying automatically. It had come to

be her habit to do what he asked her to do, and to take pride in the service as a small installment on her infinite debt. And every time her resentment rose to an overboiling point, Sir Joseph or Lady Webling would show her some exquisite kindness or do some great public service that won commendation from on high.

One day when she was keyed up to protest, Lady Webling discharged Franklin Ernst for her pro-Germanism and engaged an English nurse. Another day Lady Webling asked her to go on a visit to a hospital. There she lavished tenderness on the British wounded and ignored the German. How could Marie Louise suspect her of being anti-British? Another time when Marie Louise was almost ready to rebel, she saw Sir Joseph's name heading a war-subscription, and that night he made, at a public meeting, a speech denouncing Germany in terms of vitriol.

After all, she was not English. And America was still neutral. The President had wrung from Germany a promise of better behavior, and in a sneaking way the promise was kept, with many a vindictive quickly apologized for.

Still, England wrestled for her life. There seemed to be hardly room in the papers for the mere names of the dead and the wounded, and those still more pitiable ones, the missing.

Marie Louise lost many a friend, and all of her friends lost and lost. She won herself out in suffering for others, in visiting the sick, the forlorn, the anxious, the newly bereaved.

THE strain on Marie Louise's heart was the more exhausting because she had a craven feeling all the while that perhaps she was being used somehow as a tool for the destruction of English plan and men. She tried to get the courage to open one of those messages, but she was afraid that she might find confirmation. She made up her mind again and again to put the question point-blank to Sir Joseph, but her tongue faltered. If he were guilty, he would deny it; if he were innocent, the accusation would break his heart. She hated Nicky too much to ask him. He would lie in any case.

She was nagged incessantly by a guilty conscience that buzzed in her ear, the counsel to tell the police. Sometimes on her way to a tryst with Easton, the spirit in her feet led her toward a police station, but another spirit carried her past, for she would visualize the consequences of such an exposure. If her suspicions were false, she would be exposed as a combination of dastard and dolt. If they were true, she would be sending Sir Joseph and Lady Webling perhaps to the gallows.

To betray those who had been so glib to her was simply unthinkable.

Irresolution and meditation made her a very *Hamlet* of postponement and indecision. *Hamlet* had only a ghost for a counselor, and a mother to be the first victim of his rashness. No wonder he hesitated. And Marie Louise had no hysterical suspicion to account for her thoughts; and the victims of her fears she had ever really known. America herself was another *Hamlet* of debate and indecision, weighing evidences, pondering theories, deferring the sword, hoping



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Germany would throw away the baser half. And all the while time slid away.

In the autumn the town house was opened again. There was much thinly veiled indignation in the papers and in the circulation of gossip because of Sir Joseph's prominence in English life. The Germans were so relentless and so various in their outrages upon even the cruel usages of combat that the sound of a German name grew almost unbearable. People were calling for Sir Joseph's arrest. Others scoffed at the cruelty and cowardice of such hysteria.

A once-loved prince of German blood had been frozen out of the Navy, and the internment camps were growing like boom-towns. Yet other Germans somehow were granted an almost untrammeled freedom, and thousands who had avoided evil activity were tolerated throughout the war.

Sir Joseph kept retorting to suspicion with subscription. He took enormous quantities of the Government loans. His contributions to the Red Cross and the multitudinous charities were more like endowments than gifts. How could Marie Louise be vile enough to suspect him?

Yet in spite of herself she resolved to refuse further messenger service, just as she learned that he had left England and gone to America on most important financial business of a most confidential nature.

Marie Louise was too glad of her release to ask questions. She rejoiced that she had not insulted her foster-parents with mutiny, and she drudged at whatever war-work the committee found for her to do. They found nothing very picturesque, but the more toilsome her labor was the more it served for absolution of any evil she might have done.

And now that the dilemma of loyalty was taken from her soul, her body surrendered weakly. She had time to fall ill. It was enough that she got her feet wet. She was very ill with pneumonia and her convalescence was slow even in the high hills of Matlock.

THE winter had passed, and the summer of 1916 had come before Marie Louise was herself. The Weblings had moved out to the country again; the flowers were back in the gardens; the deer and the birds were in their summer garb and mood. But the house-guests were all wounded soldiers and nurses. Sir Joseph had turned over his estate for a war hospital.

Lady Webling went among her visitors like a queen making her rounds. Sir Joseph squandered money on his distinguished company. Marie Louise joined them and found a sorrowful rapture in being busy again, and especially in having recovered from her distrust.

When she asked of Nicky, Sir Joseph said that he was still in America. Marie Louise was mightily glad of that, and of the fact that there were no more messages to carry. She took what comfort she could in such diminution of pain and such contributions of war-power as were permitted her. Those were the only legitimate happinesses in the world.

The tennis-courts were peopled now with players glad of one arm or one eye or even a demodeled face. On the golf links crutched men hobbled. The horses

in the stables bore only partial riders. The card-parties were squared by players using hands made by hand. The music-room resounded with five-finger improvisations and with vocalists who had little but their voices left. They howled "Keep your head down, Fritzie boy," or "We gave them hell at Neuve Chapelle, and here we are and here we are again," or moaned love-songs with a sardonic irony.

And the guests at tea! And the guests who could not come to tea!

Young Hawdon was there: "Well, Marie Louise," he had said, "I'm back from France, but not *in toto*. Fact is, I'm neither here nor there. Quite a sketchy party you have. But we'll charge it all to Germany, and some day we'll collect. Some day! Some day!" And he burst into song. The wonder was that there was so much bravery. At times there was hilarity, but it was always close to tears.

THE Weblings went back to London early and took Marie Louise with them. She wanted to stay with the poor soldiers, but Sir Joseph said that there was just as much for her to do in town. There was no lack of poor soldiers anywhere. Besides, he needed her, he said. This set her heart to plunging with the old fear. But he was querulous and irascible nowadays, and Lady Webling begged her not to excite him for she was afraid of a paralysis. He had the look of a Damocles living under the sword.

The news from America was more encouraging to England and to the Americans in England. German spies were being arrested with amazing frequency. Ambassadors were floundering in hot water and setting up a large traffic in return-tickets. Even the trunks of certain "Americans" were searched—men and women who were amazed to learn that curious German documents had got mixed up in their own effects. Some most peculiar checks and receipts turned up.

It was shortly after a cloudy account of one of these trunk-raids had been published in the London papers that Sir Joseph had his first stroke of paralysis.

Sir Joseph was in pitiful case. His devotion to Marie Louise was heartbreaking. Her sympathy had not been exhausted, but schooled rather by its prolonged exercise, and she gave the forlorn old wretch a love and a tenderness that had been wrought to a fine art without losing any of its spontaneous reality.

At first he could move only a bit of the great bulk, sprawled like a snowdrift under the sheet. He was helpless as a shattered soldier, but slowly he won back his faculties and his members. The doors that were shut between his brain and his powers opened one by one, and he became a man again.

The first thing he wrote with his rediscovered right hand was his signature to a document his lawyer brought him after a consultation. It was a transfer of twenty thousand pounds in British War bonds "for services rendered and other valuable considerations," to his dear daughter Marie Louise Webling.

WHEN the warrant was handed to her with the bundle of securities, Marie Louise was puzzled, then shocked

as the old man explained with his still uncertain lips. When she understood, she rejected the gift with horror. Sir Joseph pleaded with her in a thick speech that had relapsed to an earlier habit.

"I am theenkink how close I been by dyink. Du bist—zho are in my vvvil, of course, but a man says 'I vvvil,' and some heirs says 'You vvvont yet!' Better I should make sure of somethink."

"But I don't want money, Papa—not like this. And I want have you speak of wills and such odious things."

"You have been like our own daughter only more obeyink as poor Hedwig. You should not make me sick by to refuse."

She could only quiet him by accepting the wealth and bringing him the receipt for its deposit in a safe of her own at the Bank of England.

When he was once more able to hoist his massive body to its feet and to walk to his own door, he said:

"Mein—my Gott look at the calendar once. It is 1917 already."

He ceased to be that simple primitive thing, a sick man; he became again the financier. She heard of him anew on war-industry boards. She saw his name on lists of big subscriptions.

He began to talk anew of Nicky, and he spoke with unusual anxiety of U-boats. He hoped that they would have a bad week. There was no questioning his sincerity in this.

And one evening he came home in a womanish flurry. He pinched the ear of Marie Louise and whispered to her:

"Nicky is here in England—safe after the sea-voyage. Be a nice girl, and you shall see him soon now."

CHAPTER IV

THE next morning Marie Louise on walking found her windows opaque with fog. The gardens she usually looked over, glistening green all winter through, were gone, and in their place was a vast bale of sooty cotton packed so tight against the glass that her eyes could not pierce to the sill. It was one of those fuliginous atmospheres that Victor called "pure mug."

Marie Louise went down to breakfast in a room like a smoky tunnel where the lights burned sickly. She was in a murky and suffocating humor, but Sir Joseph was strangely content for the hour and the air. He ate with the air of a boy on a holi-morn, and beckoned her into his study, where he confided to her great news:

"Nicky telephoned me. He brings wonderful news out of America. Big business he has done. He cannot come yet by our house, for even servants must not see him here. So you shall go and meet him. You take your own little car, and go most careful till you find Hyde Park gate. Inside you stop and get out to see if something is matter with the engine. A man is there—Nicky. He steps in the car. You get in and drive slowly—slowly. Give him this letter—put in bosom of dress not to lose. He tells you maybe something, and he gives you envelope. Then he gets out, and you come home—but carefully. Don't let one of those busses run you over in the fog. I should not risk you if not most important."

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that had penned the lines on the envelope. She took it reluctantly and gave him the letter she carried.

She did not wait but hastened home. Sir Joseph was in a sad flurry, but he accepted the testimony of Nicky's autograph.

The next day Marie Louise must go on another errand. This time her envelope bore the name of Nicky and the added line "*Kindness of Mr. von Gröner*."

Von Gröner tried to question Marie Louise, but her wits were in an absolute maelstrom of terror. She was afraid of him, afraid that he represented Nicky, afraid that he did not, afraid that he was a real German, afraid that he was a pretended spy, or an English secret-service man. She was afraid of Sir Joseph and his wife, afraid to obey them or disobey them, to love them or hate them, betray them or be betrayed. She had lost all sense of direction, of impetus, of desire.

She saw that Sir Joseph and Lady Webbing were in a state of panic too. They smiled at her with a wan pity and fear. She caught them whispering together often. She saw them cling together with a devotion that would have been a burlesque in a picture seen by strangers. It would have been almost as grotesque as a view of a hippopotamus and his mate cowering hugely together and nuzzling each other under the menace of a lightning-storm.

Marie Louise came upon them once comparing the envelope she had just brought with other letters of Nicky's. Sir Joseph slipped them into a book, then took one of them out cautiously and showed it to Marie Louise.

"Does that look really like the writing from Nicky?"

"Yes," she said—then "No," then "Of course," then "I don't know."

Lady Webbing said: "Sit down once, my child, and tell me just how this man von Gröner does—acts, speaks."

She told them. They quizzed her. She was afraid that they would take her into their confidence, but they exchanged querying looks and signaled caution.

Sir Joseph said: "Strange how long Nicky stays sick, and his memory—little things he mixes up. I wonder is he dead yet, who knows?"

"Dead?" Marie Louise cried. "Dead, and sends you letters?"

"Yes, but such a funny letter this last one is. I think I write him once more and ask him is he dead or crazy maybe. Anyway, I think I don't feel so very good now—Mamma and I take maybe a little journey. You come along with, yes?"

A rush of desperate gratitude to the only real people in her world led her to say:

"Whatever you want me to do is what I want to do—or wherever to go."

Lady Webbing drew her to her breast, and Sir Joseph held her hand in one of his and patted it with the flabby other, mumbling:

"Yes, but what is it we want you to do?"

From his eyes came a scurry of tears that ran in panic among the folds of his cheeks. He shook them off and smiled, nodding and still patting her hand as he said:

"Better I write one letter more for

Mr. von Gröner. I ask him to come himself after dark to-night now."

MARIE LOUISE waited in her room watching the sunlight die out of the west. She felt somehow as if she were a prisoner in the Tower, a princess waiting for the morrow's little visit to the scaffold. Or did the English shoot women, as Edith Cavell had been shot?

There was a knock at the door, but it was not the turnkey. It was the butler to murmur: "Dinner, please." She went down and joined Mamma and Papa at the table. There were no guests except Terror and Suspense, and both of them wore smiling masks and made no visible sign of their presence.

After dinner Marie Louise had her car brought round to the door. There was nothing surprising about that. Women had given up the ancient pretense that their respectability was something that must be policed by a male relative or squire except in broad daylight. Neither vice nor malaria was believed any longer to come from exposure to the night air; nor was virtue regarded like a sum of money that must not be risked by being carried about alone after dark. The world was too busy to fool with protecting such unstable characters, especially as they had found it quite easy enough to go wrong under the old régime.

So Marie Louise launched out in her car much as a son of the family might have done. She drove to a little square too dingily middle class to require a policeman. She sounded her horn three squawks and swung open the door, and a man waiting under an appointed tree stepped from its shadow and into the shadow of the car before it stopped. She dropped into high speed and whisked out of the square.

"You have for me a message," said Mr. von Gröner.

"Yes. Sir Joseph wants to see you."

"Me?"

"Yes—at the house. We'll go there at once if you please."

"Certainly. Delighted. But Nicky—I ought to telephone him I shall be gone."

"Nicky is well enough to telephone?"

"Not to come to the telephone, but there is a servant. If you will please stop somewhere. I shall be a moment only."

Marie Louise felt that she ought not to stop, but she could hardly kidnap the man. So she drew up at a shabby shop and von Gröner left her, her heart shaking her with a faint tremor like that of the engine of her car.

VON GRÖNER returned promptly, but he said: "I think we should not go too straight to your father's house. Might be we are followed. We can tell soon. Go in the park, please, and suddenly stop, turn round, and I look at what cars follow."

She let him command her. She was letting everybody command her; she had no destination, no North Star in her life. Von Gröner kept her dodging about Regent's Park till she grew angry:

"This seems rather silly, doesn't it? I am going home. Sir Joseph has worries enough without—"

"Ah, he has worries."

She did not answer. The eagerness in

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his voice did not please her. He had kept up a rain of questions, too, but she had answered them all by referring him to Sir Joseph.

At last they reached the house. As they got out, two men closed in on the car and peered into their faces. Von Gröner snapped at them, and they fell back.

Marie Louise had taken along her latchkey. She opened the door herself and led von Gröner to Sir Joseph's room.

As she lifted her hand to knock, she heard Lady Webling weeping frantically, crying out something incoherent. Marie Louise fell back and motioned von Gröner away, but he pushed the door open, and taking her by the elbow, thrust her forward.

Lady Webling stopped short with a wail. Sir Joseph, who had been trying to quiet her by patting her hand, paused with his palm uplifted.

Before Marie Louise could speak, she saw that the old couple was alone. By the mantel stood Mr. Verrinder. By the door almost touching Marie Louise was a tall, grim person she had not seen. He closed the door behind von Gröner and Marie Louise.

"This is Miss Webling," said Mr. Verrinder to the man and to her. "Be good enough to sit down." To von Gröner he said: "How are you, Bickford?"

CHAPTER V

SIR JOSEPH was staring at the newcomer, and his German nativity, with its instinct for fine intuitions, told him what Marie Louise had not been sure of, that von Gröner was no German. When Verrinder gave him an English name it shook Marie Louise with a new dismay. Sir Joseph turned from the man to Marie Louise and demanded:

"Marie Louise, you ditt not theenk this man is a Cherman?"

This one more shame crushed Marie Louise. She dropped into a chair, appealing feebly to the man she had retrieved:

"Your name is not von Gröner?"

Bickford grinned. "Well, in a manner of speakin'. You might say it's my pen-name. Not that I've ever been in the pen—except with Nicky."

"Nicky is in the—he's not ill, then?"

"Well, he's a bit sick. He was a bit seasick to start with, and when we gave him the collar—well, he doesn't like his room."

"But his letters—" Marie Louise pleaded, her fears racing ahead of her questions.

"I was always a hand at forgery, but I thought best to turn it to the aid of me country. I'm proud if you liked me work. The last ones were not up to the mark. I was hurried, and Nicky was ugly. He refused to ahnswer any more questions. I had to do it all on me own. Ahfterwards I found I had made a few mistakes."

When Marie Louise realized that this man had been calmly taking the letters addressed to Nicky and answering them in his feigned script to elicit further information from Sir Joseph and enmesh him further, she dropped her hands at her

side, feeling not only convicted of crime but of imbecility as well. She would not add to her disgrace by pleading further ignorance or weakness.

Sir Joseph and Lady Webling spread their hands and drew up their shoulders in surrender and gave up all hope of bluff. The entrance of Marie Louise had broken upon Lady Webling's very climax of tirade against the atrocity of Verrinder's stupid accusation. She did not pursue the question further.

Verrinder wanted to be merciful and avoid any more climaxes.

"You see it's all up, Sir Joseph, don't you?" he said. Sir Joseph drew himself again as high as he could, though the burden of his flesh kept pulling him down. He did not answer. "Come now, Sir Joseph, be a sport."

"The Englishman's releechion," sneered Sir Joseph, "to be *ein Sportmann*."

"Oh, I know you can't understand it," said Verrinder. "It seems to be untranslatable into German—just as we can't seem to understand *Germany* except that it is the antonym of *humanity*. You fellows have no boyhood literature, I am told, no Henty or Hughes or Scott to fill you with ideas of fair play. You have no games to teach you. One really can't blame you for being such rotters, any more than one can blame a Kaffir for not understanding cricket."

"But sport aside, use your intelligence, old man. I've laid my cards on the table—enough of them, at least. We've trumped every trick, and we've all the trumps outstanding. You have a few high cards up your sleeve. Why not toss them on the table, and throw yourselves on the mercy of His Majesty?"

The presence of Marie Louise drove the old couple to a last battle for her faith. Lady Webling stormed: "All what you accuse us of is lies, lies!"

Verrinder grew ugly.

"Lies, you say? We have you, and your daughter—also Nicky. We have—well, I'll not annoy you with their names. Over in the States they have a lot more of you fellows."

"You and Sir Joseph have lived in this country for years and years. You have grown fat—I mean to say rich—upon our bounty. We have loved and trusted you. His Majesty has given you both marks of his most gracious favor."

"We paid well for that," sneered Lady Webling.

"Yes, I fancy you did—but with English pounds and pence, that you gained with the help of British wits and British freedom. You have contributed to charities, yes, and handsomely too, but not entirely without the sweet usages of advertisement. You have not hidden that part of your bookkeeping from the public."

"But the rest of your books—you don't show those. We know a ghastly lot about them; and it is not pretty, my dear lady. I had hoped you would not force us to publish those transactions. You have plotted the destruction of the British Empire; you have conspired to destroy ships in dock and at sea; you have sent God knows how many lads to their death—and women and children too. You have helped to blow up munitions-plants, and on your white heads is the blood of many and many a poor wretch torn to

pieces at his lathe. You have made widows of women and orphans of children who never heard of you, nor you of them. Nor have you cared—or dared—to inquire.

"Sir Joseph has been perfecting a great scheme to buy up what munitions-plants he could in this country in order to commit sabotage and slow up the production of the ammunition our troops are crying for. He has plotted with others to send defective shells that will rip up the guns they do not fit, and powders that will explode too soon or not at all. God! to think that the lives of our brave men and the life of our empire should be threatened by such people as you!"

"And in the American field Sir Joseph has connived with a great syndicate to buy up all the factories, to stop production at the source since your U-boats and your red-handed diplomatic spies cannot stop it otherwise. Your agents have corrupted a few of the Yankees, and killed others, and would have killed more if the name of your people had not become such a stench that even in that land where millions of Germans live they can hardly tolerate the thought of you, and every proffer is suspect."

"You see, we know you, Lady Webling and Sir Joseph. We have watched you all the while from the very first, and we know that you are not innocent even of complicity in the supreme infamy of luring the *Lusitania* to her death."

He was quivering with the rush of his emotions over the broken dam of habitual reticence.

LADY WEBLING and Sir Joseph had quivered too, less under the impact of his denunciation than in the confusion of their own exposure to themselves and to Marie Louise.

They had watched her eyes as she heard Mr. Verrinder's philippic. They had seen her pass from incredulity to belief. They had seen her glance at them and glance away in fear of them.

This broke them utterly, for she was utterly dear to them. They made no answer to Verrinder. After all, he was the sworn enemy of the country of their idolatry. But this girl was dearer than their own flesh and blood. She had replaced their dead. She had been born to them without pain, without infancy, born full grown in the prime of youth and beauty. They had watched her love grow to a passion, and their own had grown with it.

What would she do now? She was the judge they feared above England. They awaited her sentence in craven fear.

Her eyes wandered to them and searched them through. At first, under the spell of Verrinder's denunciation, she saw them as two bloated fiends, their hands dripping blood, their lips framed to lies, their brains to cunning and that synonym for Germanism, *ruthlessness*—the word the Germans chose, as their Kaiser chose Huns for an ideal.

But she looked again. She saw the pleading in their eyes. Their very uncomeliness besought her mercy. After all, she had seen none of the things Verrinder described. They were but oratory, and the reverberations of his contumely were already stilled. The only real things to

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her, the only things she knew of her own knowledge, were the goodnesses of these two. They were her parents. They had made her their first charity. She had had nothing from them but goodness. And now for the first time they needed her. The mortgage their generosity had imposed on her had fallen due.

How could she at the first unsupported obloquy of a stranger turn against them? Her first loyalty was due to them, and no other loyalty was under test. Something swept her to her feet. She ran to them and as far as she could, gathered them into her arms. That broke them, and they wept like two children whom reproaches have hardened into defiance but whom kindness has melted.

Verrinder watched the spectacle with some surprise and not altogether with scorn. He understood. Whatever else Miss Webling was, she was a good sport. She stuck to her team in defeat.

He said not quite harshly:

"So, Miss Webling, you cast your lot with them."

"I do."

"Do you believe that what I said was true?"

"No."

"Really, you should be careful. Those messages you carried incriminate you."

"I suppose they do, though I never knew what was in them—no, I'll take that back. I'm not trying to crawl out of it."

"Then since you confess so much, I shall have to ask you to come with them."

"To the—the Tower of London?"

"The car is ready."

MARIE LOUISE was stabbed with fright. She seized the doomed twain in a faster embrace:

"What are you going to do with these poor souls?"

"Their souls, my dear Miss Webling, are outside our jurisdiction."

"With their poor bodies, then?"

"I am not a judge or a jury, Miss Webling. Everything will be done with propriety. They will not be torpedoed in midocean without warning. They will have the full advantage of the British law to the last."

That awful word jarred them all. But Sir Joseph was determined to make a good end. He drew himself up with another effort.

"Excuse, please, Mr. Verrinder—might it be we should take with us a few little things?"

"Of course."

"Hang you." He bowed and turned to go, taking his wife and Marie Louise by the arm, for mutual support.

"If you don't mind, I'll come along," said Mr. Verrinder.

Sir Joseph nodded. The three went heavily up the grandiose stairway as if a gibbet waited at the top. They went into Sir Joseph's room, which adjoined that of his wife. Mr. Verrinder paused on the sill somewhat shyly:

"This is a most unpleasant task, but—"

Marie Louise hesitated, smiling gruelingly.

"My room is across the hall. You can hardly be in both places at once, can you?"

"I fancy I can trust you—especially as

the house is surrounded. If you don't mind joining us here—"

Marie Louise went to her room. Her maid was there in a palsy of fear. The servants had not dared apply themselves to the keyholes, but they knew that the master was visited by the police, and that a cordon was drawn about the house.

The aspen girl offered her help to Marie Louise, wondering if she would compromise herself with the law, but incapable of deserting so good a mistress even at such a crisis. Marie Louise thanked her and told her to go to bed, compelled her to leave. Then she set about the dreary task of selecting a few necessaries—a nightgown, an extra day gown, some linen, some silver and a few brushes. She felt as if she were laying out her own grave-clothes, and that she would need little and not need that little long.

She threw a good-by look, a long, sweeping, caressing glance, about her little castle, and went across the hall lugging her handbag. Before she entered Sir Joseph's room, she knocked!

It was Mr. Verrinder that answered: "Come in."

He was seated in a chair, dejected and making himself as inoffensive as possible. Lady Webling had packed her own bag and was helping the helpless Sir Joseph find the things he was looking for in vain, though they were right before him. Marie Louise saw evidences that a larger packing had already been done. Verrinder had surprised them.

Sir Joseph was ready at last. He was closing his bag when he took a last glance and said:

"My toot'-brush and powder."

He went to his bathroom cabinet, and there he saw in the little apothecary-shop a bottle of tablets prescribed for him during his illness. It was conspicuously labeled "Poison."

He stood staring at the bottle so long in such fascination that Lady Webling came to the door to say:

"Vat is it you could not find now, Papa?"

SHE leaned against the edge of the casement, and he pointed to the bottle. Their eyes met, and in one long look they passed through a brief Gethsemane. No words were exchanged. She just nodded. He took the bottle from the shelf stealthily, unscrewed the top, poured out a heap of tablets and gave them to her, then poured another heap into his fat palm.

"Prosit!" he said, and they flung the venom into their throats. It was brackish merely from the coating, but they could not swallow all the pellets. He filled a glass of water at the faucet and handed it to his wife. She quaffed enough to get the pellets down her resisting throat, and handed the glass to him.

They remained staring at each other, trying to crowd into their eyes an infinity of strange passionate messages, though their features were all awry with nausea and the premonition of lethal pains.

Verrinder began to wonder at their delay. He was about to rise. Marie Louise went to the door anxiously. Sir Joseph mumbled:

"Look once, my darlink. I find some bong-bongs. Would you like, yes?"

With a childish canniness he held the bottle so that she could see the skull and crossbones and the terrible word beneath.

Marie Louise, not realizing that they had already set out on the adventure, gave a stifled cry and snatched at the bottle. It fell to the floor with a crash, and the tablets leaped here and there like tiny white beetles. Some of them ran out into the room and caught Verrinder's eye.

Before he could reach the door, Sir Joseph had said triumphantly to Marie Louise:

"Mamma and I did eat already. Too bad you do not come vit. *Adé, Töchterchen, lebe wohl!*"

He was reaching his awkward arms out to clasp her when Verrinder burst into the homely scene of their tragedy. He caught up the broken bottle and saw the word "Poison." Beneath were the directions, but no word of description, no mention of the antidote.

"What is this stuff?" Verrinder demanded in a frenzy of dread and wrath and self-reproach.

"I don't know," Marie Louise stammered. Verrinder repeated his demand of Sir Joseph.

"Weiss nit," he mumbled, beginning to stagger as the venom struck its fangs into his vitals.

Verrinder ran out into the hall and shouted down the stairs.

"Bickford, telephone for a doctor, in God's name—the nearest one. Send out to the nearest chemist and fetch him on the run—with every antidote he has. Send somebody down to the kitchen for warm water, mustard, coffee."

There was a panic below, but Marie Louise knew nothing except the swirling tempest of her own horror. Sir Joseph and Lady Webling, blind with torment, wrung and wrenched with spasms of destruction, groped for each other's hands and felt their way through clouds of fire to a resting-place.

Marie Louise could give them no help, but a little guidance toward the bed. They fell upon it—and after a hideous while, they died.

LONG after they were still, Marie Louise was racked with the poison in her own soul. It was almost morning before she was calm enough to understand what the exhausted Verrinder was saying:

"As a last favor to Sir Joseph and Lady Webling, the physician is giving out to the papers a story that Sir Joseph and Lady Webling were the victims of ptomaine poisoning as a result of eating some tinned salmon at dinner. It will save us all such a lot of explaining."

Marie Louise nodded her head in grateful acquiescence. Verrinder went on:

"Only Nicky and you are left, and Nicky is in prison and will be shot before many days, I expect. And now, if you are strong enough, it is time to ask you a few questions."

The second installment of Mr. Hughes' new novel will appear in the next—the October—issue of The Red Book Magazine, on sale September 23rd. There is no lessening—there is even gain—in the dramatic sweep of the story as it progresses.

THE FINAL CLOSE-UP

(Continued from page 100)

occurred to him that Emily would tell. He hadn't pledged her to secrecy; he hadn't even thought it necessary. To tell wasn't—well, wasn't exactly sporting.

He wondered if Nora had heard. But she gave not a sign, by even so much as the flicker of an eyelash. Her lashes, he noted incidentally, were long and black and a beautiful accessory to her eyes. And as these returned his gaze, they smiled up at him. He forgot his worries.

The shock was great, therefore, when after they had retreated to the veranda-rail once more, Nora said suddenly: "They're on to me, I guess."

"What?"

"I heard your friend Emily—Miss Westervelt-Moore, I mean—say something about a bargain basement. That's me."

Norton understood perfectly, but to gain time he pretended not to.

"I work in Featherman's basement at eight per," she explained. "And while I'm telling you about it, I might as well mention that my father worked in the street-department—until a charge of dynamite got him."

"What difference does it make?"

"It might make a lot—to some people."

Norton laughed aloud. "I'll tell you something. The difference between your father and mine is simply this—a charge of dynamite didn't finish mine."

Nora stared. "He—he didn't work in the street-department?"

"Cross my heart and hope I may die. The only excuse I have for being here is that I got fired from the newspaper I was working on. The Ocean House had already made me an offer to come and play summer ball—I pitched in college, you see,—and so I came here."

"Then you're not a—a millionaire?"

"When they fired me, I had just fifteen dollars and seventy-three cents. The Ocean House gives me my board and ten dollars a week. If you want to see a real live millionaire, look at Lloyd Gregory, dancing with Miss Westervelt-Moore."

Nora looked. Lloyd Gregory proved to be the young man with a negligible nose and prominent teeth.

"Let's dance," suggested Norton.

The evening was past its prime when Nora reached Four-eighty. Nevertheless she sat on the bed and meditated. And there is no use in pretending that she wasn't thinking of Norton. This does not mean she was in love. She was—well, just considering things. The world is not so full of fairy princesses, remember, that a girl, even though she be as pretty as Nora, can afford to be a sleeping beauty.

In his room Norton was also doing some thinking. "She's a dead game little sport," he remarked with profound conviction.

He was not thinking of Emily.

Emily was, indeed, proving a very poor sport. Nora learned the very next morning that the orange sweater and the hat that matched had once been the property of Miss Westervelt-Moore. But she simply stuck her hands in the sweater pockets and swaggered a bit—adorably, to Norton's way of thinking.

"They're much better," she said, speaking to Norton but raising her voice so that the woman with the jeweled plaque need not strain her ears so, "than the stuff the folks my mother did washing for used to give me."

Norton grinned, but the "large party," as Nora dubbed her, rose and disappeared in the direction of the manager's office. The manager himself waited upon Nora soon after. He was an exceedingly suave man, who washed his hands in the atmosphere and kept his eyes somewhere in the middle distance while he ah-hemmed and ah-trusted Nora would understand.

Nora regarded him coldly. "If you're suggesting that I get out," she said, "tell it to Sweeney. I'm here for a week. Of course if you want to try and put me out—"

The manager expostulated that he did not mean anything like that, although of course legally—

"If it's anything legal," intervened Nora with deadly sweetness, "I'll have to refer you to my lawyer." In Nora's own words, the manager quit cold then.

"I'd hate to have to ask a favor of him, though," she told Norton.

Episodes such as these were, however, mere interludes. They simply served to revise Nora's estimate of Society.

"The men aren't so bad," she conceded, "but the women—good night! If I had to sit around all day and listen to their line of talk, it would give me the Willies. They don't sound more than half alive."

"Sour grapes!" commented Norton with a provocative grin.

"Lemons!" amended Nora serenely.

Nora accepted him as an equal. He redeemed his promise to teach her tennis, which she condescended to as a "cinch"—until she tried to hit the ball.

"Fifteen-love," he said.

Nora shot a glance at him.

"Love," he said serenely, "is a tennis-term. It means nothing."

"I'll bet you," she said, "that a good lawyer could make a breach of promise out of it."

The next ball she hit by the purest chance, and so surprised was he that he failed to return it. "Fifteen-love," she mocked, and added: "Gee this must be a great game for old maids."

It flashed to his mind that she would never be an old maid.

After tennis they went in swimming.

"Can you swim?" he asked.

"Y-e-s—when it's not over my head."

"That," he assured her, "is as helpful as being able to shoot—except when you're aiming at a burglar."

Nora splashed him and forgot to worry about the money she had had to leave tucked in the toe of her stocking in the bathhouse.

Afternoons they walked or sat on the beach in a particular spot which, after the immemorial fashion of young folk, they had discovered and preempted as their own. Evenings they danced. He became Jimmy to her, and she became Nora to him. And time pursued the even tenor of its way, and it became Tuesday morning. And Jimmy wanted to know if

she couldn't manage a few days more. And Nora replied, with absolute finality, bred of the knowledge that she had just seventy dollars left, that she could not.

Nora let the sand trickle between her fingers,—they were on the beach drying off after their morning swim,—and Jimmy smoked his pipe and relapsed into silence, reviewed his past and reconstructed his vision of the future, until Nora glanced up at the clock under the eaves of the pavilion and said: "It's time to dress."

"I'll take one more duck," he said, "and beat you, at that."

"Bet you don't," she retorted.

Jimmy was in the water five minutes. When he came out, Gregory hailed him.

"Hey, Jimmy—did you leave anything of value in your room?"

"My watch," he said.

"Well, I hope you kissed it good-by," said Gregory. "Sneak-thieves raided the pavilion while we were all in bathing."

"They got my scarfpin and fifty bucks," said a young chap.

"And a platinum brooch and vanity bag from me," added his sister.

"They even took my gold-mounted knitting-needles," mourned a young matron. "I wouldn't mind that, but I had a sweater half done, and it's absolutely ruined."

Everybody laughed. The loss of their valuables was, after all, rather a lark. It gave a pleasurable little thrill to the day. And not until Norton was taking a shower did the possibility of Nora's having been robbed occur to him.

"She would have known better than to leave anything there," he assured himself, but he hurried with his dressing nevertheless.

Nora was just emerging from the women's side when he left the men's. "Did you lose anything?" he cried out.

Nora looked startled, and he explained. "Sneak-thieves ransacked the place, and I didn't know but what you might have left money or something of value in your room."

"Oh, no!" said Nora quickly.

This was not true, but instinct clamored that she hide the truth. She had discovered, at once, that her money was gone. And she had slumped down in her wet bathing-suit, absolutely overwhelmed. She owed fifty-two dollars and fifty cents! If the manager would only be decent and give her time to pay—but at that point her eyes narrowed.

"Fat chance!" she decided. "I guess it's up to little Nora to face the music."

Jimmy, suspecting nothing, was relieved. That Nora seemed abstracted as they walked to the hotel did not occur to him. He was abstracted himself.

"I wish you weren't going this afternoon," he said.

Nora smiled. "I'm going in to see the manager now," she replied. "Perhaps he'll persuade me to stay."

It struck Jimmy as a good joke. He loitered in the lounge waiting for her to finish with the manager. Several times he glanced at the clock and thought it took her a long time to pay her bill. Finally she came.

"Did he persuade you to stay?"
"He almost called in the police," she said, and smiled.

"Then you'll stay," he jested.

Nora held out her hand. "Good-by," she said.

"But you aren't going until the two-thirty train," he objected.

"I've changed my plans. Good-by."

"But I—I'm going to see you off, you know."

Nora shook her head.

"Oh, I say!" he protested. "I—"

"I don't want you to," she flashed, and left him standing there like a statue of a young man who doesn't know what struck him.

"Why," he grieved, "she didn't even say good-by!"

Which, of course, was an injustice to Nora. She had said good-by twice, by actual count.

JIMMY proceeded to become quite masculine. If that was all she cared, well—all right! He lunched with subdued ferocity and then stalked around the lounge—not, of course, with any intention of seeing Nora again. And when three o'clock came and she had not reappeared, it was the thought that he needed exercise and not the suspicion that she had deliberately given him the slip that caused him to go out and hike a good twelve miles before dinner.

When he returned, the lounge was filled. As he entered, a curious silence fell, and he was conscious of mirthful eyes turned upon him. He wondered if there was anything wrong with his appearance, but the mirror assured him that he looked all right—and sometime later it also told him that his evening clothes were unimpeachable.

Nevertheless when he appeared in the dining-hall (rather late), there was the same suggestion of some secret everybody shared. Something funny, apparently, because that idiot Gregory grinned! It got Jimmy's goat—and getting Jimmy's goat was a good deal like catching a Tartar.

After dinner he sauntered out and stood by the desk, his eye challenging. Emily was addressing a group within earshot—and one never needed an ear-trumpet to hear Emily.

"It will come natural to her," said Emily. "Her mother washed clothes, you know."

This caused merriment, and Jimmy again became the cynosure of all eyes. At that moment Gregory came to the desk in search of a match. Jimmy swung toward him.

"What's the joke, Greg?" he demanded. Gregory grinned. "Oh, come through," said Jimmy with disgust. "What's the use standing there looking like a boiled owl? Why can't anybody look at me without seeing something funny?"

Gregory gave him a stare of surprise. "On the level, don't you know?" Jimmy shook his head. "Well, I'll be blown!" exclaimed Gregory. He assimilated this. Then: "There goes Emily—why don't you ask her?"

Emily was just disappearing onto the veranda. Jimmy took up the pursuit.

"Oh, so it's Mister Norton," said Emily.

"Gregory said you'd tell me what the joke is," he explained abruptly.

"You don't know!" she exclaimed. She



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searched his face. "Well, your protégé is washing dishes for a change."

"Washing dishes!" Jimmy could not credit it.

Emily smiled. "She told the manager that she was robbed this morning. She said she lost seventy dollars—all she had." "Why, she told me she hadn't lost anything," Norton blurted out.

"And the manager told her," continued Emily serenely, "that she would have to work it out."

"Do you mean to say that he actually made her do that?"

"The hotel isn't exactly a charitable institution, you know."

Jimmy swung about without another word. Through the window Emily saw him cross the lobby and enter the very large, exceedingly suave manager's office. He was there not more than a minute, but he evidently transacted a large amount of business. Anyway, the manager summoned assistance to help him handle the rush. Indeed, the latter must have pushed all the buttons in the vicinity of his desk, because the room-clerk, the head porter and a bellboy started for his office within ten seconds of Jimmy's arrival there.

The matron's button was also pushed in the excitement, but she was late in arriving. Jimmy was just coming out as she was going in. He bowed and stood aside to let her pass. He was slightly flushed, and there was a dent in his shirt-front. Otherwise he looked well and almost happy.

Emily's eyes had been on the door to the manager's office—as, indeed, had been the eyes of everybody in the vicinity. As Jimmy turned toward the dining-hall, she gasped.

"He's going to the kitchen," she thought.

Emily guessed right the very first time.

Jimmy threaded his way along the tables and burst through the swinging doors.

"Where's Miss Nolan?" he demanded of the white-capped chef.

In the realm which Jimmy had so unceremoniously invaded the chef ruled as an absolute autocrat. To ask him, without ceremony, concerning the whereabouts of a person so lowly as a dishwasher was like majesty. He started to shrug his shoulders, and then as Jimmy's eyes grew grim, he changed his mind.

"Eet ees possible that as she ees finish, she ees gone to the beach," he said with a wave of his hand toward the door. And as Jimmy vanished, the chef grimaced and added: "Barbarian!"

He glanced up as the swinging doors parted again. This time a bellboy came through—the same bellboy that had answered the manager's summons. He looked rather more rumpled than usual, and far more human.

"The manager wants a beefsteak," he said to the chef.

The chef glanced at the clock and shrugged his shoulders.

"The meat-cook—" he began.

"Aw, he wants it raw," cut in the bellboy.

OF course Jimmy had an idea where Nora might be. He went straight to their particular nook. And there she was, her chin cupped in her hands, gazing out to sea.

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"Nora—why didn't you tell me?" he demanded without preface.

He took her by surprise, but she rallied instantly.

"Haven't you troubles of your own?" she countered lightly. "And what could you do about it, anyway?"

"I've given the manager a—piece of my mind," said Jimmy grimly.

"You shouldn't have butted in," said Nora spiritedly. "I told him I'd pay him if I had to wash dishes, and he took me up. If," she added with a smile, "it had been the other way around, I'd have probably done the same to him."

This gave Jimmy pause. "But your position, Nora—"

"There's no need of my worrying about that until after the fifteenth of September."

"You're not going to stay here until then?"

"The manager won't hear of my leaving before." She stopped and then added: "Little did I think I would ever spend a whole summer at the beach."

"But Nora—you washing dishes! I won't have it. I—"

"It's no worse than washing clothes, and my mother did that for years. And anyhow, it serves me right. I always wondered how it felt to be in society. If anybody asks me now, I can tell them."

The silence that followed was broken only by the surf pounding along the shore.

"I think," he broke out suddenly and explosively, "that you are the gamest kid I ever knew." And as she glanced up at him he added, "Nora!"

Now, what happened thereafter was inexplicable, save as it be taken for granted, like the magic of moonlight on the sea, or of birds singing in the tree-tops, or a perfect sunset, or any and all other beautiful things in life. Her eyes met his, and there was a moment of indescribable breathlessness, and then he said in a tone that was a blending of wonder, awe and flooding hope:

"Nora—dear—you—I—"

And that was all. She found herself in his arms, and she thought: "He is hurting me." But it was a blessed hurt, and her heart was too full and her lips were too—occupied, to give it utterance.

"Now that you belong to me," he announced, this was sometime later, of course,—"I'm going to settle with the manager."

The suddenness with which she removed her head from his shoulder left his words in midair.

"There is something I've got to tell you," she said. And as he reached out to recapture her, she drew away. "No—you mustn't. I—I wouldn't be here if—if—"

It was hard to go on. In the movies, when the heroine has a "past," the hero understands beautifully. But Nora had begun to mistrust the movies. Supposing Jimmy shouldn't understand—

"If your fairy godmother hadn't sent you two hundred dollars?" he suggested blithely. He had expected that would come out sooner or later, and if she was worrying about it, the sooner the better.

Nora's eyes widened. "Why," she gasped, "how did you know?"

JIMMY grinned. "Because I was the fairy godmother," he explained, and drew her to him as if that settled it.

Of course it didn't. Mystery is as abhorrent to the true woman as dust on the living-room mantel. She wriggled free and held him off, with a demand that he explain. He started off glibly enough, but her attitude was uncompromising, and he suddenly perceived that it might be difficult to make her understand how he happened to act the part of a bargain-baseball Haroun Al Raschid. So he began to flounder and to intersperse his monologue with "and of course" and "you see."

"No, I don't see," said Nora coldly, and proceeded to cross-examine him. "You seemed to be all in white—"

"I had on a Palm Beach suit."

"And you seemed to have a thermometer."

"I was just coming to that. Mike Flaherty—he's the city editor of the sheet that fired me—told me to take a thermometer and go to a lot of different places about town and find out which was the hottest and then write a story about it."

"Did he tell you to go to Featherman's?"

"He did not! I heard two women talking, and one of them said: 'They're selling house-dresses in Featherman's bargain basement for two-fifty, but I simply couldn't stand it there. It's the hottest place in town.'"

Nora smiled in spite of herself at his mimicry, but when he interpreted this as a sign of weakening, she eluded him and demanded, point-blank: "Where did you get the two hundred?"

"From my father," he began, unaware of any pitfall.

Nora sprang to her feet. "You said your father worked in the street-department like my father!"

"He did. I—"

"And that you were getting ten dollars a week for playing ball here—"

"I am. Please, Nora—be reasonable."

"I am reasonable, but I don't see how you could tell me such—"

"I didn't," he denied indignantly. "When I graduated, Dad wanted me to go into the business, but I had an idea I'd rather do newspaper work. He said he'd send me my allowance on the tenth of July, just the same as ever, but that was the last cent he'd give me until I got ready to work for him—"

"It was your allowance that you sent me, I suppose," she commented.

He nodded. "And the next day they fired me because I said in my story that the hottest place was Featherman's basement." He paused and then added remissively: "The hottest place the next day was our business office. Featherman's was one of the biggest advertisers."

Nora didn't know nor care. "Why didn't you go to your father?"

"Because Dad isn't the kind that serves fatted calf to the prodigal son. I'd have to eat crow. I didn't care for that, and I knew that these summer hotels were always after ball-players—I played in college, you know."

"Is your father a millionaire?"

"Well—he's pretty close to it, I guess."

"Then," she said with finality, "that's where I get off."

THE utter astonishment with which he stared at her shook her, but she plunged on. "I mean it. You don't catch



"Holler 'nuff!"

They hadn't a thing in the world against each other—unless it was that Tom Sawyer thought the other boy altogether too well dressed. They had never even seen each other until a few minutes before—and here they were tied in a knot.

Do you remember the time when the mere sight of another boy made you mad—and what mighty good friends you might be with that boy a few minutes later?

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little Nora butting in where she isn't wanted. What I said about this society stuff goes. I stuck it out here because it was only a week, but if you think I'd let myself in for it for life—"

"Why, Nora!"

"Don't—don't touch me. I—I hate you," she stormed.

Philosophers maintain that hate and love are almost synonymous at times. But Jimmy was no philosopher just then.

"I don't see—" he began.

"No, of course you don't!" she flashed. "But your father would see—and your mother. Oh, I know what happens to a poor girl who marries a millionaire's son."

One would have imagined, from the manner in which she spoke, that Nora had passed her life in marrying millionaires' sons.

"I won't—so!" she finished, and started away.

Jimmy started after her. "Nora," he pleaded. "Listen!"

She hesitated. "What?"

"You don't—you don't picture my father as wearing spats and having a butler and all that, do you?"

"Y-e-s."

Jimmy laughed aloud. "Why, Nora," he cried, "my father is a contractor. They call him Hip-Hip Hooray Norton. The pick he used hangs on the wall of his office, and he wouldn't take it down for a million dollars."

"I don't care—"

"And he calls a dress suit 'that damn thing,' and he would kick a butler from here to Cork and back. And he said to me: 'Jimmy, my boy, if I ever catch you marrying—are you listening, Nora?'"

Nora nodded, in a way that suggested she conceded nothing.

"Marrying a chorus girl, a Black Protestant or one of them society girls in a décolletay gown, I'll lay your head open with that pick, so I will."

Jimmy paused and registered hope. But Nora remained adamant.

"Did your folks happen to come from Comemara?" he ventured hopefully.

"Y-e-s."

"So did my dad," he cried joyously. "If—if you'll come with me while I tell him that, you'll find out why they call him Hip-Hip Hooray Norton. I'll have to eat crow—but I'd eat anything for you, Nora."

Nora, however, seemed too deeply interested in digging in the sand with one small toe to applaud that. Although Jimmy didn't realize it, she was in the position of a young lady who wants to capitulate but who still hangs to the vestige of her dignity.

"Wont—can't you forgive me, Nora?" he asked, humble when he should have been masterful. "You see, I need you awfully. Dad will probably put me to work as an assistant foreman or something like that, at four dollars a day. And I—we'll have to be saving, Nora!"

Nora's toe became very busy indeed, and it seemed as if it were going to be indefinitely. The time for him to take her firmly in his arms had come—but he didn't know it.

"In—in the movies," she said finally, "they have something they—they call—"

"Yes," he prompted breathlessly.

"Call the final close-up. And"—she lifted her face to his—"it's—it's—"

Jimmy grabbed her, and his lips crushed the last two words against hers. Otherwise they would have been:

"Like this."

THE CALL OF LIFE

(Continued from page 66)

At the same time, he was worried. He had spent every cent his father allowed him, much more than he had ever dreamed of spending before, and in addition had drawn his own small reserve, which he had been saving to make an investment "on his own."

The word *money* filled Marquita with painful embarrassment. She had not expected Humphrey to construe her words as a request. She wanted to thank him, but the idea of taking money from this man who each day seemed to become more of a stranger and less of a friend, yet to whom, for some unknowable reason, she was bound, humiliated her and made thanks impossible.

"You are very good," was all she could say.

"Very good—you are awfully amusing sometimes, Marquita. Don't you know that's what husbands are for?"

Despite his confident manner, Humphrey was compelled to write to his father for more money, which came promptly, accompanied by a letter in which it was made very clear that this additional money was a special concession and would not be repeated.

At the same time the long-promised letter from Humphrey's mother came. It was addressed to Marquita and asked that they come to the Wells home on their

return to St. Louis and remain until they could establish a home of their own. The thought of going back to St. Louis at all had been unpleasant to Marquita, both because she loved New York and because she feared meeting her husband's parents and being in the same town with John Gratiot without being free to see him; and the thought of living under the same roof with Humphrey's father filled her with dread. To Humphrey the letter came as a solution to his immediate troubles, for he had no money with which to establish a home, and a good hotel was equally beyond his reach at his present income; he had been wondering how he could explain to Marquita the necessity for living in a cheap hotel or boarding-house. He took Marquita's acceptance of the arrangement for granted.

"That's just like Mother," he said. "I'm so glad she suggested it. I want you and Mother to love each other, and it will give me a chance to explain the absolute necessity for more money to Father. You're glad, aren't you?" he finished as he noted the half-concealed dismay on Marquita's face.

"Yes—only I thought we would be quite alone—in a home of our own."

"That's only because you're tired of hotels. I don't wonder at that; they're

beastly places, especially for a woman. We will have our own home soon, but at first it will be pleasant for you to be with Mother. It will keep you from being lonely while I am away at business. You know I can't devote as much time to you at home as I have here in New York."

"I know I will love your Mother; her letter was very kind," said Marquita. She dared not tell Humphrey that she disliked his father, and she guessed something of his financial problem. She was dependent on him for everything now, and she was too proud to raise objections or make suggestions.

THE time of their return to St. Louis was very near, and Humphrey was compelled to spend most of his day away from Marquita, crowding into a short space of time the business which he should have done when he first came.

Marquita, left to her own devices, was walking down Fifth Avenue. It was the Fifth Avenue of four o'clock in the afternoon from which every trace of sordid poverty is barred by reason of its working-hours. The horde of lunch-hour toilers who had choked the street a few hours earlier had disappeared, and in their place were left the children of luxury whose only apparent reason for being was to see and be seen.

Suddenly a woman emerging from one of the shops hesitated in front of her, and she looked up into the smiling face of Delia Renson's mother.

"How do you do, and when did you arrive, and why didn't you tell me you were coming, Marquita? You see, I remember your first name."

"But not my last, Mrs. Chisholm, for I've changed it," said Marquita.

"Oh, that explains everything. You don't have to answer my question,—a honeymoon, of course,—and you couldn't be expected to remember anyone. But now that we have met by chance, you must come to tea with me and tell me all about it."

As she talked, she led Marquita to a blue limousine that was waiting at the curb. Marquita exclaimed at the beauty of the car.

"Unfortunately it doesn't belong to me," explained Mrs. Chisholm carelessly. "It belongs to a friend of mine, a man who is out of town a lot, and he lets me use it."

They drove to the Waldorf, only a few blocks away, and Marquita wondered why they didn't walk; they could have walked in less time than they could get through the crowded street in the huge car. They found a table by one of the windows looking out on the Avenue.

To Marquita's surprise Mrs. Chisholm did not order tea, but cocktails. Perhaps her surprise showed on her face.

"One always calls it tea," said Mrs. Chisholm, "but I never heard of anyone's really drinking it."

"There are some women drinking tea at the next table," said Marquita.

"What a literal-minded child you are! I mean, of course, that our sort of people don't drink it."

Instantly Marquita felt flattered and sophisticated. Mrs. Chisholm had called her "our sort."

"I always need a cocktail about this



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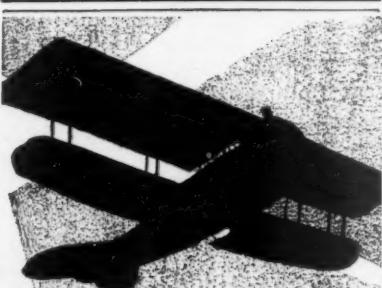
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time, especially when I've been shopping. It's so tiresome."

Marquita thought shopping anything but tiresome, but she would not have said so for worlds.

"Now tell me all about your romance," said Mrs. Chisholm.

MARQUITA told her the story of her elopement, and her hostess seemed deeply interested.

"Didn't Delia write to you about it? The girls at the school must have heard."

"Of course they heard. It must have created quite a sensation, and Delia may have written about it. I never pay much attention to her letters—just look to see if she's well or needs more money. You know," she apologized, "she lives with my mother, and so she is in good hands. Thank God, I don't have to worry about her. How long will you be here?"

"We're leaving in two days," said Marquita.

"What a shame! There are so many people I want you to meet—but you'll be here again?"

"I couldn't stay away if I wanted to," said Marquita. "I adore New York. Of course, Humphrey will bring me here again."

Mrs. Chisholm laughed.

"Next time you'll come alone," she said. "You'll soon get over the stage of wanting always to be with your husband. I remember my first husband and how I thought I couldn't live two weeks without him. Now I'm lucky if I see Mr. Chisholm four times a year. More than that would bore me to death."

"Aren't you in love with him?" asked Marquita. It was rude, perhaps, but she wanted to know. She was quite sure that she did not love Humphrey, though she was very fond of him. She wanted to know how women loved, and why.

"Love, my dear, is the feeling you have for the man you can't get. That's all I know about love. In that you are probably wiser than I am. I'd rather talk about clothes than love. Why, for example, are you trying to dress like your own grandmother? Is it the influence of Miss Pringle?"

Humphrey likes dark colors, and I just bought this frock to please him; I hate it."

"I didn't mean the color. Wear black if you wish; it would be rather becoming to you. It's not colors that count, but cut. I've got a dressmaker who could change your frock into the smartest thing imaginable in about three hours. If you had more time, I'd take you there, but now I suppose your time is limited."

"I ought to be going back to the Grandon now. Humphrey said he'd be back at half-past five. He'll worry if I'm not there."

"Wait a minute," said Mrs. Chisholm. She was smiling at some one over Marquita's shoulder. In another minute the object of her smile came into view; Marquita looked at him and wondered why Mrs. Chisholm seemed so cordial. The man was a bit above medium height, well built and almost meticulously groomed. His hair was gray, and he wore a close-clipped gray mustache. His face was further adorned by a beard which would have been a Van Dyke if the point had

not been cut off square. She was trying to think of the right name for this particular kind of beard.

"What a strange place to see you, Baron Brinker!" Mrs. Chisholm was saying.

"Not at all! I go to all sorts of places, even tea-rooms."

Marquita thought there was a suggestion of condescension in his voice. He glanced quickly at Marquita when Mrs. Chisholm introduced them, his sharp eyes seeming to take in every detail of her appearance. She wished that she were not dressed in her new manner. Mrs. Chisholm had called her "Miss Wells," too. That was strange, that she should remember her new name, but call her "Miss" instead of "Mrs."

"We were just preparing to leave, but we'll wait while you have a drink if you care to share our table," Mrs. Chisholm was saying.

"I'm sorry; I haven't time for that. I just stopped in to find a man who evidently isn't here. I must go on to the next probable place. Will you be in town long?" he added, speaking to Marquita.

Again she thought of her dress. It must be that that told him she was not a New York woman.

"No; we're leaving in a few days," she answered.

"Then I sha'n't see you again—until you return."

The significance he put into the simple words made it seem to Marquita that he was making an engagement with her. She felt the warm blood mounting in her cheeks under his fixed stare.

"I may not come—I'm not sure of returning to New York," she stammered.

"Yes, you will; if you had not come at all, it would be different; but having come once, you will return. You are too beautiful and too conscious of your beauty to be content to waste it in a smaller sphere."

Marquita could not answer this, but Mrs. Chisholm laughed as if she understood.

HIS glance lingered on her as he said good-by, and he left Marquita with the conviction that he was very much interested in her and that he intended to see her again.

"He might at least have paid our bill here," Mrs. Chisholm was saying.

"Who is he? Is he really a baron?" asked Marquita.

"No; it's just a nickname."

"Tell me about him," insisted Marquita.

"I don't know very much, and what I do know I don't suppose I ought to tell, but of course I will. He runs a gambling house—a big place on East Sixty-first Street. I've never been there but once, with Bill. Bill had some business with him, and he asked me never to go there when he was out of town. I've never gone since that time. To be quite honest, Brinker never asked me again. He keeps open house, and after people have once been accepted, they can come as often as they wish. But one can't bring other people without first consulting the Baron. I've heard that the gambling-house was just a screen for bigger things—that he's a sort of

political power behind the throne, but I don't know. There isn't a gambling-game in the world that you can't play in his house. Most of his men guests are prominent—many of them city officials; they say he has entertained governors. And the women are all persons too—popular actresses and rich women at loose ends."

"He talked as if he expected to see me again," said Marquita.

"Yes; that rather surprised me. You've evidently made a hit with him. He has a reputation for never getting entangled with women. The women who go to his house are all treated exactly alike. He never seems to have any particular interest in any of them, but of course, the man doesn't live who hasn't any interest in any woman, and the older and more clever they are, the more surely they will fall hard for some one very young and very pretty. But come, your husband will think I've kidnaped you. When you come again, be sure and let me know. Time works great changes, and you may not be so horribly married a year from now. I imagine we could have some awfully good times together. From your effect on Baron Brinker, I can guess that you'd make a great sensation among some of the more susceptible men I know."

Her shrewd blue eyes regarded Marquita with a speculative glance as she spoke.

Marquita was thinking of what Baron Brinker had said about her returning. Would she really return, she wondered. She must come back some day to do all the things she had wanted to do this time.

"You won't forget." It was Mrs. Chisholm breaking into her daydream. They had reached the Grandon, and she was saying good-by.

"I won't forget!" Marquita answered.

CHAPTER IV

THEY were to arrive home on Christmas Eve. Humphrey had explained to her that there would be no celebration in his house. There had been none since his mother became hopelessly ill, and his father never observed the day except by attending church and not going to his office.

A thin carpet of snow covered the ground, and through the cab windows Marquita caught glimpses of holly-wreaths and Christmas trees in the houses they passed. She thought of Christmas on the ranch, where all the men had given her presents because the instinct of giving was in them and because she was the only child through whom they could perpetuate the tradition of the holy day. The muscles of her throat ached, and tears came into her eyes.

The cab stopped, and Marquita saw her future home—a large old-fashioned house with Colonial pillars. There were no holly-wreaths in the windows, and most of them were dark, though night was near. Instinctively Marquita clung to Humphrey's arm as they walked up the steps. There was something cold and forbidding about the house, and in spite of its substantial proportions and pros-



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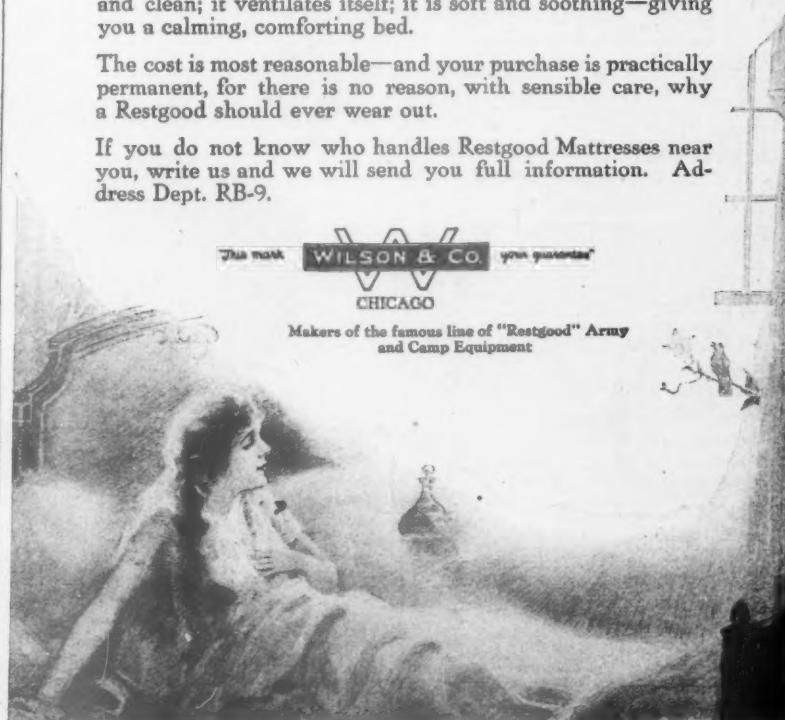
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ed, and she was overwhelmed with pity and a sense of her own futility.

"You are very kind, child, but the good Lord has spared my eyes, and I can still read His holy word. Tell me your name. Humphrey has written it, but I can't pronounce it."

"Marquita; it's a Spanish name."

"I thought it sounded foreign. I shall call you Martha. It is something like, and sounds more Christian."

"But I don't like the name Martha; it's an ugly name." The words were out of Marquita's mouth before she thought.

"Martha is a beautiful Christian name and has a beautiful significance. The Marthas of the world are the burden-bearers."

"I hope Marquita will never have to bear any great burdens," said Humphrey, smiling.

"She is already bearing one of the greatest burdens a woman can bear—the burden of beauty."

It was then Marquita laughed, a high, sweet laugh, hysterically checked midway of its fulfillment. She felt as if she had laughed at a funeral. A slight frown multiplied the innumerable lines that pain had wrought on the face of Mrs. Wells.

"You can leave me now, children," she said. "You must be tired from your journey, and I can never talk long. I will see you both again to-morrow." Again Humphrey kissed her, and again Marquita pressed her warm young lips to the cold cheek; then they went out. As the door closed behind them, Marquita's nerves gave way and she burst into tears. She clung to Humphrey because he was the one warm, living thing near.

"She doesn't like me—she doesn't like me, and I laughed," she sobbed.

"Don't, dear; she'll hear you. Come down, and I'll find out where we're to sleep, and you can bathe and rest. You're just tired and nervous. Mother does like you. She's the best mother in the world. Remember, she has been there almost ten years. Mother is a martyr and a saint. She likes you, and you must like her." His tone was half comforting, half scolding.

She made an effort to control her tears, but they did not escape the eyes of the servant who was waiting for them at the foot of the stairs.

"Mrs. Wells said that you're to have your own room, Mr. Humphrey. She said there was no need to make any change. It's a large room, and Mrs. Wells said you'd only be here temporarily anyway, and that Mrs. Humphrey could make herself at home in the whole house. There's no one else to use it, Mrs. Wells being in her own room all day, the way she is. I've taken your bags up there. Mr. Wells has just come in. He's in the library, and dinner will be ready in half an hour."

She spoke quickly, running her words together; and in spite of her respectful tone, Marquita felt that she was saying: "I'm housekeeper here; I've been housekeeper here for years, and no chit of a girl is going to come in and order me about."

"Take Mrs. Wells up to the room; I'm going to see Father. —I'll be with you

in a few minutes, Marquita; I know Dad is anxious to talk business."

HE left her standing with the big, sour-faced woman, who seeing before her only a tired child with a tear-stained face, realized that she was not a formidable enemy, and immediately became human.

"You're tired, Miss—I don't know what to call you—having two Mrs. Wellses in the house is confusing."

"Call me Marquita."

"Miss Marquita," corrected the housekeeper. "I'm Mrs. James; there's only two of us, cook and me, for all the house is so big. What I wanted to say is I'll draw a hot bath for you, and if you hurry, you can have it before dinner."

The room to which she led Marquita was, as she had said, large. To Marquita it also looked bare, as an exclusively man's room usually looks to a woman. It was this, Marquita later decided, that made the entire house unhome-like. Mrs. Wells seldom left her own room, and while from her room she controlled the machinery of the house, she could not give it an atmosphere of femininity or warmth.

Having decided that Marquita was not a person to be feared, Mrs. James became so assiduous in her attention and so voluble in her disclosures that it was with difficulty that Marquita was able to make her toilet. The presence of the housekeeper also prevented her from giving way to her tears, and calmed her so that she no longer felt the need of them. In the room below, Humphrey was telling his father the truth about Marquita's income. Marquita knew this—knew it was a thing of such importance in the Wells scheme of things that to withhold the information, now that they were in his father's house, would be almost a crime. The thought of Mr. Wells' anger and dismay cheered her; and when Humphrey knocked at her door, she was her usual smiling, happy self.

The dining-room was as big and bare as the rest of the house. Here, as in the rest of the house, there had been no attempt to remember the holiday season. Charley Wells was standing before a small gas-grate; his back was toward them. He turned as they entered, but made no movement to meet them. Marquita was glad that he did not move. She had feared that he would make a pretense of welcome. She did not like Charley Wells, and she did not want him to like her.

"Good evening, Mr. Wells, or perhaps I should say 'Merry Christmas.' To-morrow is Christmas Day, you know."

There was the faintest trace of mockery in her tone. Mr. Wells extended a fat hand.

"You have not told her the bad news, Humphrey?" His tone was solemn, but Marquita saw a vindictive satisfaction in his small green eyes. She was amused at being called "her" as if she were a child or not present. She turned to Humphrey questioningly and could not resist saying:

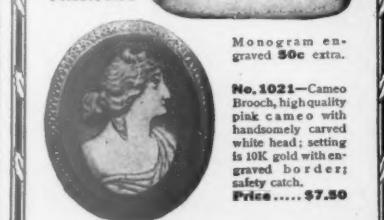
"I thought it was Mr. Wells who heard the bad news."

When she saw Humphrey's distressed countenance, she was sorry for her flippancy.

"I thought I wouldn't say anything



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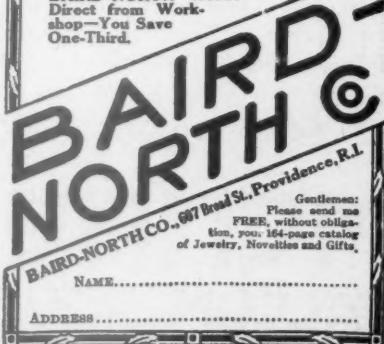


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until to-morrow, but if you think best, Father— It was in to-day's paper, Marquita. I suppose it's better that you should hear it from me than that you should read it suddenly. Your guardian—John Gratiot—he died this morning."

FOR a moment Marquita stood looking blankly at Humphrey. Then she turned mechanically and walked dazedly out of the room and sat down in the half-light on the stairs. She was not grief-stricken then; it was too unbelievable. Her brain had ceased to function. She felt Humphrey's arms about her, lifting her up; and beyond him she saw Mr. Wells standing in the lighted doorway watching. Instantly she was alive again. "Don't cry," she heard Humphrey's voice saying.

"I'm not going to cry," she said, and walked resolutely back into the dining-room. "Let me see the newspaper."

"Wait awhile—wait until after dinner. It will upset you and—"

It was like Humphrey to tell her to wait until after dinner, she thought. She looked at him with hard, bright eyes.

"Let me see it now. If your father killed him, that will not be in the newspaper. He is here living and free."

"The fool killed himself." It was Charley Wells who spoke, snapping the words out with brutal force, and at the same time handing her a newspaper.

A sick nausea came over her, and she sank into a chair, clutching the newspaper; but no tears came to her eyes, and she would not faint with her enemy, the man she hated, looking on. Even now she was conscious of feeling sorry for Humphrey. If she had fainted or wept, it would have been easier for him. Her very strength made him helpless. He stood, miserably, watching her as she read, while his father, as if to emphasize the fact that the occurrence was no affair of his, took his place at the head of the table.

The newspaper account was very brief, one of those unimportant things with a small headline that the thousands glance at casually and pass on; but to Marquita every letter stood out black and enormous until it filled the page.

The story said simply that John Gratiot had been found dead in his room at the Southern Hotel, shot by his own hand. The suicide was probably caused by despondency due to recent financial losses. The deceased had no near relatives. He was the son of the late John J. Gratiot, who had once been prominent in St. Louis financial circles.

Marquita did not know how many times she read it, or if indeed she read it at all. It was there, and she saw it; one sees something so big that it covers everything else. She got up again and walked out of the room. Humphrey was at her side before she reached the stairs. With a motion of her hand she told him to go back. Then she walked up the stairs to her room.

CHAPTER V

MARQUITA went to church with Humphrey and his father on Christmas morning. Mr. Wells drove his own car, as he could never get a chauffeur to please

him. Marquita was glad of this, because it gave her an opportunity to ride with Humphrey in the back seat, where she did not have to pretend to be polite to Mr. Wells.

The church to which they went was large and rich. There were many windows of extreme ugliness, and a pompous minister of the ultramodern business-man type. The church was over half filled with people who whispered and stared at one another, until Marquita could not but wonder why they had come. They sang a song about being washed in the blood of the lamb which sounded gruesome and meaningless, and another about "Onward, Christian Soldiers," with a great swing and life to it like millions of men marching on to some great victory. It reminded her of the Canadian soldiers they had seen marching through Edwardstown the day they left. John had felt it too, for she had heard him talking to himself: "Ah, if I were only younger!" he had said. The morning sun blazed through the windows, a shaft of it resting on the bald part of Charley Wells' head. She wondered if Humphrey would ever look like that. He was taller than his father, and showed no signs of ever growing stout. His eyes were wide-set and clear gray, and his mouth was kind. Sometimes when he looked at her and smiled an understanding smile, as he did just now, she felt that it would be possible to love him as heroines in romance loved the men they married. It would be easy to love Humphrey Wells; but to love Charley Wells' son seemed an impossibility.

IN the back seat of the big car on the way home, Marquita remarked to Humphrey:

"Your preacher is awfully funny, isn't he?"

"Why, no—I've always thought Mr. Spiegler very dull."

"Why do you go to hear him, then?" "It pleases Mother, and Dad expects it; it doesn't take up much time, and I suppose it's good for a fellow to go to church."

"I think the whole thing is silly nonsense. I sha'n't go again."

Humphrey made no response to this. "I've been thinking about Mr. Gratiot," he said. "If you want to go to his funeral, I'll find out about it for you."

"No; don't do that. It is nice of you to think of it, but there'd be no use in going. John won't be there, you know; and besides, I don't know that he'd want me. He was angry at me or he would have left a message."

"I always go up to see Mother after church. Do you want to come with me?" Humphrey asked as they drew near the house.

Marquita assented. Humphrey's mother had excited her curiosity. She wanted to see her again, but she would have been afraid to go alone.

A white-capped nurse flitted out of the room as they entered. Mrs. Wells seemed to Marquita to be in exactly the same position in which she had last seen her: the open Bible still lay beside her.

"Merry Christmas, children!" she greeted them. She at least remembered what day it was.

"Did you enjoy the sermon?"

The question was directed at Marquita, but Humphrey answered for her. "It was very good, Mother."

"It is so long since I have heard one; still, I have my Bible. That reminds me: I have a letter here for you, Martha. Mrs. James brought it up by mistake. It is addressed to Mrs. Humphrey Wells, but I have been the only Mrs. Wells in the house for so long that Mrs. James did not notice the first name. I do think we should be able to get on without a mail-delivery on Christ's birthday," she added, "but this is a worldly age."

Marquita took the letter and with a shock recognized John Gratiot's writing. She did not open it, though both Humphrey and his mother looked at her expectantly.

"Do tell me about the service." Mrs. Wells spoke after a moment's embarrassed pause during which Marquita put the letter in her coat-pocket.

Humphrey gave a detailed account of the church service, so detailed that Marquita wondered how he could remember so much. Then, evidently with the idea of giving them a chance to become better acquainted, he said that he may go down to speak to his father.

"You can stay until Mother grows tired," he said.

WHEN he was gone, the swaddled mummy with the clear gray eyes that were so disconcertingly like Humphrey's eyes looked at her long and earnestly.

"You will perhaps be surprised, but I am glad that Humphrey has married. I have thought a great deal about Humphrey's future. Shut in here as I am, I can't watch over him as I would if I were active, and I have feared that he would become too much immersed in business, too much—"

Was Marquita dreaming, or did a faint flush steal into those withered cheeks? "Too much under his father's control," Mrs. Wells went on bravely. "You know, men need women in their lives; and if they don't find the right sort, the wrong sort will find them. I'm glad he has married, and I hope you will make him happy."

There was a tone in her voice that gave Marquita the impression that she was very doubtful if her hopes would be realized, but Marquita did not speak. She sat on the edge of her chair, thinking of her letter and eager to be gone.

"I live up here in one room, but somehow I manage to keep myself in touch with things. I was young once, and people said that I was beautiful—" A strange little laugh issued from the wrappings. "I know how life beckons—how a thousand roads open to the woman who is young and pretty and full of life—a thousand roads open, but only one is right, the white highroad where sunlight shines. You must be patient—patient, my child. We all travel to the same end, and there is nothing left but memories—it is better that those memories should not be bitter with remorse. With my affliction God has given me a keener insight than is given to most people. My son loves you; he will never love any other woman. If you are not happy together, it will be because of your own folly. A thousand roads beckon

to you and beauty, but only one is right—the white highroad walled by convention and paved with homely virtues. The bypaths open out from it, and it may seem dull at first, but there is peace and quiet and joy in it."

She stopped speaking, and Marquita saw that her eyes were closed. She wondered if Mrs. Wells was delirious and if she ought to call the nurse. She wanted to go, but did not know how to leave the room gracefully. Mrs. Wells opened her eyes and began speaking in her usual manner.

"I wish you were a Christian—your guardian's death should be a warning to you."

Marquita started; she did not know that Mrs. Wells had heard.

"You can go now—you are eager to read your letter, I know." She held out one of her old hands, and Marquita took it. After the door closed behind her, it came to Marquita that Mrs. Wells expected to be kissed. She shrugged her shoulders, but years afterward she often thought of the appeal in the helpless woman's eyes and of the mark of affection that she had not given. It was of no importance, perhaps, but it was such a little thing to do, and she had not done it.

HUMPHREY and Mr. Wells were downstairs, she knew; so she went directly to her own room and opened the letter there. It was a curious message to come from a man who was dead, and not what Marquita expected, though she was not at all sure what she did expect.

"Dear Quita," he wrote. "I'm sorry about your father's will and that I didn't take better care of you. If I had anything to leave, I would leave it to you, though I dare say I wouldn't be preparing for death if I were not cleaned out. Wells did it. First he bought the ranch and then got me to invest my money in some fake stock that blew up a month later. I thought it was good because he was interested. You wouldn't understand. He's in with a group of men who are getting control of as much wheat as possible to send to Germany by way of Holland. He broke me after I refused to go in with him. When this country gets into the war, he'll get his punishment, but he isn't farsighted enough to see that. What I wanted to say to you is—if there's any stuff in that boy you married, try and separate him from his scoundrel of a father. It will be your only chance for happiness. Don't feel sorry for me. I've lost, and I'm too old to start a new game. —John."

Marquita did not feel sorry for John Gratiot. She knew how they both felt about the war; their years in Alberta had made them as much British as American. The idea of monopolizing wheat to send to Germany was terrible to her as it had been to John Gratiot. She felt that Wells was her guardian's murderer as much as if he had fired the pistol that had killed him. Her chief emotion was one of anger at Charley Wells. She could not live under the same roof with this monster. Humphrey must take her away. She would not mind how poorly they had to live if only they could be alone together somewhere. She would see Humphrey at once and tell him.

She found him with his father in the



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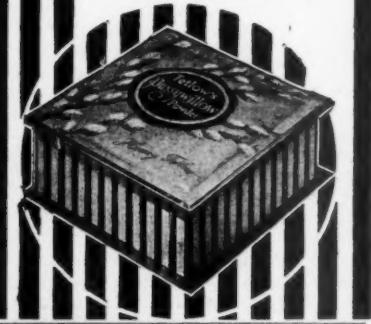
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library, both reading newspapers. Humphrey looked up with a welcoming smile as she entered.

"Let's go out somewhere, Humphrey," she said.

"Out? Where? There isn't any place to go."

"Oh, just for a ride; I want to get out in the air."

She saw Humphrey glance nervously at his father, as if he feared some demonstration of disapproval, and the glance angered her. Mr. Wells sat immersed in his paper, apparently paying no attention to them.

"Put on your hat and cloak. I'll have the car out in five minutes."

SHE was waiting for him in the Colonial doorway when he drove around from the garage which was at the back of the house.

"This is the first thing," she said as she seated herself beside him, "—a letter from John. He wrote it before—before yesterday, you know."

She watched his face as he read, and saw the tightening of his lips. He was trying to think of some defense for his father. That he had ruined John Gratiot he had no doubt. He was beginning to be more or less familiar with his father's business methods.

"Why shouldn't Dad get wheat to send to Germany?" he asked. "We're not at war with Germany; we're supposed to be neutral and can sell supplies to both sides. It's just a question of who pays more, I suppose."

"We're not neutral, though—at least I'm not, and John wasn't, and none of the men at the ranch were. I heard lots of men talk about the war, and they were all pro-Ally. But let's not quarrel about the war. I just showed you the letter, because it's only one of my reasons for wanting to live somewhere else."

"But we're going to have a home of our own soon. This is just a temporary arrangement."

"How soon, Humphrey? You can't know how I hate it there. Please don't misunderstand. I like your mother, but she doesn't need me. If I were of any use to her, it would be different. And I don't like your father, and he hates me. I don't want to live in his house—I don't care how poor we are. Life at the ranch wasn't luxurious, you know. We could get on very nicely, I know. I know how to keep house—if we only had two rooms, I wouldn't mind. It's so dull and gloomy there, Humphrey. I can't stay."

Humphrey listened to her with conflicting emotions. He wanted Marquita to be happy. The thought of a home of their own was as dear to him as to her, perhaps dearer, for to him it meant living alone with the woman he loved, while to her it meant escape from his father's house.

He knew, too, that they could live on his salary—very simply, but thousands of married men were living on less. The only real obstacle was his father. All his life Humphrey Wells had deferred to his father's wishes and modeled his conduct on his father's plans, not because he feared his father, as Marquita thought, but because of his mother. The slightest opposition to his father's wishes would

precipitate a quarrel that would break his mother's heart, perhaps kill her. She had told him very often that he must never quarrel with his father, convinced him that a break in the family would kill her.

Humphrey knew, too, that his mother had not asked him and Marquita to live there without first consulting his father. If they went away to live on Humphrey's salary, his father would be angry, because while he was too mean to give his son more money, he would be humiliated if his son lived independently in the only manner possible on his small salary. He did not know how to explain these things to Marquita; so he seized on her last words.

"It would be just as dull if we were alone, Marquita. We can't expect to live always as we lived in New York. You must learn to live without excitement. Life isn't all a holiday, you know."

"I don't want excitement; you don't understand me at all. I just want to be alone with you."

Instinctively Marquita knew that this would be her most powerful argument. Humphrey had been irritated with the irritation that a man always feels when the woman he loves asks for something he cannot give. Now when she said, "I just want to be alone with you," with a little nestling movement at his side, he was all tenderness again.

"You can't want it one bit more than I do, Marquita darling, and we will be alone together—soon. Just be patient."

"How long—tell me truly how long it will be." She was so much in earnest that he decided to be altogether honest with her.

"At least a year, I think. Dad is very much occupied with something—perhaps it's this wheat business; anyway he's turning other things over to me more and more, and while he won't pay me more than he'd pay a stranger, he will have to pay me as much as he would any other man. I'll demand it. In another year we can be alone, Marquita. So be a good child and wait just a little longer. Surely a year isn't much?"

But Marquita did not answer. To her a year seemed a century. When she spoke again, it was of other things, and Humphrey thought she was satisfied.

THE dull days dragged on. Humphrey and his father talked business after dinner, and Marquita sought the refuge of her own room, because she wanted to be as far away from Charley Wells as possible. She read a great deal—novels that she borrowed from Mrs. James. There was a "library" in the Wells house, but there were no books in it except a large Bible and a book entitled "One Thousand and One Facts," which she discovered from the inscription on the flyleaf, had been given to Humphrey on the occasion of his twelfth birthday.

One afternoon she met Delia Renson after school and took her to tea, but they had nothing in common. Delia seemed to look at her with awe and asked hundreds of silly questions about marriage which Marquita could not answer. She seemed to think that Marquita ought to be an entirely different person.

One day Marquita saw the nurse

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rying a tray to Mrs. Wells' room and asked if she might take it.

"I'm afraid Mrs. Wells won't like it," the nurse had answered, "but of course, if you want to try it once, and tell her that you asked me—"

"I'll take all the responsibility," said Marquita impatiently. Why were they all so afraid of each other?

"I took the tray away from Nurse and brought it in myself so I could see you," she said as she entered the invalid's room.

"That wasn't necessary—I mean you could have come without the tray. I am accustomed to being taken care of by Miss Gray. She understands just what I want. Was there anything you wanted to say to me?"

"No; I just wanted to know how you are and if I can do anything for you."

"No, there is nothing, thank you, and I am always the same."

The nurse had followed Marquita into the room and was arranging the tray on the table at Mrs. Wells' side. Chilled by her unwelcoming attitude, Marquita stood speechless, wondering how she might escape.

"I am afraid that you haven't enough to do, Martha. You should interest yourself in church work. Before I became ill, every moment was filled—foreign missions, the Ladies' Aid Society, my Sabbath-school class, Bible-study. There is so much work to be done. The next time Dr. Spiegel calls, I will speak to him about you."

"Thank you; I think I'll go now, if you are sure there is nothing—"

Mrs. Wells was not listening. Marquita fled, determined never to return unless she was sent for. She sought the refuge of her own room and read for the third time a note that she had received from Mrs. Chisholm the day before.

"Such a wonderful New Year party!" Mrs. Chisholm had written. "I thought of you and wished that you could have been here. Yesterday I met Baron Brinker, and he inquired about you. You must come and visit me soon."

WHY shouldn't she visit Mrs. Chisholm? Why should she be condemned to live in this funeral house where no one laughed or talked or acted like a human, where even Humphrey was afraid to be natural? The contrast between the things more hinted at than told in Mrs. Chisholm's letter, and her own life, made her more dissatisfied than ever. She would ask Humphrey to let her go to New York, but he would not consent to let her visit Mrs. Chisholm. She had told him about meeting her, and Humphrey hadn't liked it. He had told her to avoid Mrs. Chisholm. He had heard about her at home. She was a divorced woman, and there were very good reasons why Delia lived with her grandparents instead of with her mother. Mrs. Chisholm had come from a good old St. Louis family, but—

And then he wouldn't explain, but she understood well enough. Mrs. Chisholm was pretty and gay, and Humphrey was evidently bent on keeping Marquita away from everyone interesting. No, that wasn't quite fair. It was just that she and Humphrey saw things so dif-

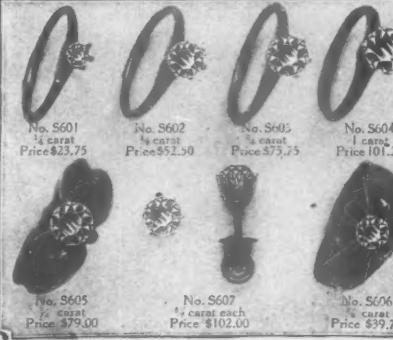
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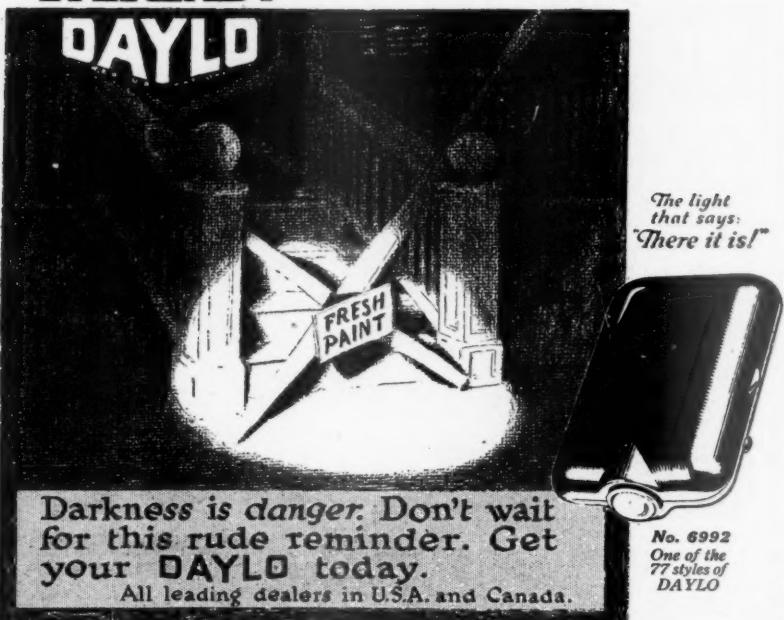
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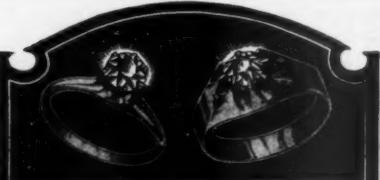
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ferently. She should never have married him. No girl ought ever to marry a man without first meeting his parents. Probably no one would ever get married then. If she had money—She began to realize why people valued money. Meant independence and freedom. If she had money, she would go to New York. She would tell Humphrey that he could come with her if he wanted to come, but if he preferred his father and mother to her, then she would go without him. It would be very dramatic. He would refuse to come at first. Later he would come to New York on business, and meet her. She would be very gay and happy and surrounded by friends, and Humphrey would realize his mistake and would beg her to give him another chance. She would forgive him then, and he would stay in New York.

She was dreaming, indulging in self-dramatization, but underneath it all was a genuine feeling—a desperate realization that she could not go on with her present life. She had no thought of running away. She had seen enough of that. Hereafter what she did would be done openly. One thing she knew: she could not go on living in the Wells house. She would tell Humphrey when he came home that very night.

She faced the ordeal of another dinner with Charley Wells with more composure than she had felt since coming to the house. It would be the last, she thought. She went to her own room immediately after dinner, knowing that Humphrey would follow her as soon as possible. It was as if they were living in a boarding house.

She tried to read a novel while she waited, but the characters seemed insipid and uninteresting. She did not want to read about life; she wanted to live. At last she heard him coming to the room that had become a haven for them both. He threw open the door and kissed her,—all in one movement, it seemed,—then turned to pick up a cigarette.

"I've been perishing for this for two hours," he said. "You know how Dad hates cigarettes, though I can't see where they're any worse than his black cigars."

"Why do you mind what he thinks of cigarettes? You are old enough to do as you please." Her tone was impatient. It was not at all the way she had intended beginning her talk with Humphrey.

"Oh, it makes life easier to humor him. If I do anything that displeases him, he complains to Mother, and that makes her unhappy. Besides, I'm not with Dad all the time, fortunately. Let's talk about something pleasant."

"I want to talk, but I'm afraid it isn't pleasant. I've been waiting for you to come—to tell you that I won't live here any more. I'm going away."

HUMPHREY had thrown himself wearily into a chair when he lighted his cigarette, while Marquita stood looking down at him. His cigarette dropped from his hand, and he stared at her as if he did not quite understand what she was saying. Then his face grew gray, and she saw the hard, stubborn lines form around his mouth.

"You mean that you want to leave me—a separation." He spoke slowly, with a

she married Harry a man. She had married him, began to money. It freedom. It go to New Humphrey that wanted to father and would go with dramatic first. Later work on business would be very by friends, his mistake him another him then, work.

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to humor displeases , and that I'm not entirely. Let's said it isn't for you to live here

in himself he lighted stood look- te dropped at her as and what she grew gray, born lines to leave me with a

WITH an effort Humphrey stopped the sharp protest that rose to his lips. All the exquisite loveliness of her, the infinite possibilities of her youth and ignorance, of the impulsive nature that had made her marry him, spread themselves before him, and for a second his pride fell before his fear of what might come to her if she went to New York alone. Then he thought how she had come into his life without consulting any higher authority than her own vagrant will. She had the right to go out of it the same way if she chose. He had no claim on her except their love, and if she did not love him, that was gone. His heart ached for her, but his pride kept him silent. He rose without speaking and went to the door. There he turned and looked at her.

"I will not ask you to stay," he said. "If you will meet me to-morrow at lunch-time, I'll have some money for you, and of course I'll send you all I can."

He was gone before she could protest. This was another thing about which she had not thought—how she was to live after reaching New York. She determined that she could not be dependent on Humphrey Wells. Other women worked and she could work too. How to get to New York without taking money from Humphrey was her biggest prob-

lem, hard note in his voice that she had never heard before. It frightened her. She had not thought of leaving Humphrey—of what people call a separation. Her one thought had been to get away from Humphrey's family.

"I don't mean that exactly—you could come too if you would; but I've asked you, and you say you must stay here a year longer. I can't do that. I didn't marry your father and mother; and I won't live with them. I hate them both! They treat you like a schoolboy; and you submit to it. I thought I was marrying a man."

This was the outburst that came from Marquita's lips instead of the calm and dignified speech she had planned. Her habit of restraint was broken through; she had gone too far, said too much. She realized it when she looked at Humphrey. It was he who was calm and dignified.

"I am sorry, Marquita, that I have disappointed you, and of course if you do not love me, I'll not try to keep you here."

"I didn't say that—it isn't you; it's just—everything." She was fighting hard to keep from tears now, but apparently Humphrey did not see.

"It wasn't necessary to put it into so many words," he said with a stiff smile. "Just where would you like to go?"

She wanted to cry out that he was mistaken—that she did love him. She was not sure that this was true, but it seemed more true than it had ever seemed before. If she could have reached out and touched him, she knew that his reserve would break down, that she would cry in his arms—there would be a reconciliation, and life would go on again as before. For a moment she wavered; then she thought of his father and became firm in her resolve to go on.

"I'm going to New York."



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lem. After she arrived there, all would be clear, she felt.

She went to bed, but sleep would not come. So she got up and turned on the light. She would busy herself with packing. The servants had put her trunks somewhere, and it was too late to call anyone, but there were two bags in the room. She would pack the necessary things in those and get her trunks in the morning. It was then that she thought of her jewelry. Marquita loved jewelry, and her collection was more marked for quantity and variety than for value. Still, she knew that she had spent quite a sum of money on it, and that it could be sold. She put it all together in a small box, carefully reserving a pair of earrings that had belonged to her mother. These were the only things to which she attached any sentimental value.

Marquita woke in the morning cramped and cold where she had fallen asleep on the floor. Mrs. James was knocking on her door.

"Come in," Marquita called.

"Mr. Humphrey asked me to bring up your breakfast," said Mrs. James as she entered with a tray. She stared curiously at the disheveled little figure on the floor.

"I'm sorry you're not feeling well," she added.

"I'm quite all right," said Marquita, springing to her feet.

"When you didn't come down to breakfast, Mr. Humphrey said you had a headache. You shouldn't be on the floor that way half dressed; you'll catch cold."

Now that Marquita was on her feet, her head did ache. Mrs. James was all sympathy.

"I'll draw you a hot bath," she said, "while you're drinking your coffee."

She hustled out of the room again, and while she was gone Marquita decided to ask her help.

"Where can I sell some old jewelry that I'm tired of?" she asked.

Mrs. James glanced around the disordered room with a suspicious glance. Her eyes rested on the two traveling bags in the middle of the floor.

"They're lots of pawn-shops on Olive Street," she answered, "but I wouldn't do anything hasty if I was you. I don't want to be inquisitive, but if you've had a quarrel, I'd just wait until to-night and make it up."

"I haven't quarreled with anyone," said Marquita, "but I do need some money, and I don't need this—junk."

MR. JAMES' suspicions were allayed. She had been a servant long enough to know some of the various expedients that women use to get more money than their husbands give them.

"If you'll give your things to me," she said, "I'll take them out and pawn them for you. Then you can get them back some day."

Marquita gratefully accepted this offer. She bathed and dressed and over the telephone found that there was a train for New York at noon and that she could get accommodation on it. She decided to go at once if Mrs. James brought back enough money. She would take only her bags. Humphrey could send her trunks later. She would let him know where she was stopping, after

she arrived. She thought of writing him a note, but did not know what to say—there was nothing to say. Her marriage had been a mistake. Humphrey recognized that as fully as did she. She was consumed with a very passion of eagerness to be gone.

When Mrs. James returned, Marquita's bags were packed, and she was fully dressed, sitting beside them, waiting.

"Here's the tickets and—"

Mrs. James stopped short and stared.

"Where are you going—what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to New York this noon."

"Without saying good-by? Now, you just be patient, dear; this can't be serious. You'll wait a long time before you find any man that's as fine as your husband. If you've had a quarrel, do please wait. You'll feel different an hour from now. Mr. Humphrey'll be sending up flowers or something."

"I haven't had any quarrel, Mrs. James—you don't understand."

"Does Mr. Humphrey know?"

"Yes."

Marquita knew that this was not strictly true, for while Humphrey knew that she was going, he did not think that she would go that noon. He expected to see her before she left. Unconvinced but afraid to take any action, Mrs. James left her alone. Marquita looked at the pawn-tickets and the roll of bills in her hand. There was four hundred dollars, much more than she had expected to get—and the tickets showed that Mrs. James had gone to two pawnshops, probably because she feared to excite suspicion by presenting all of the things at one place.

Marquita took a last look around the room to see if she had forgotten anything. There was nothing there that she regretted leaving, nothing that pulled at her heartstrings, she thought. Then she saw a picture of Humphrey on her dressing-table. The clear gray eyes seemed to reproach her. Hastily she took it up and put it into her bag. Then she went down and telephoned for a cab. Mrs. James, in an adjoining room, saw her and stood hesitating in the doorway.

Marquita held out her hand.

There were tears in Mrs. James' eyes as she took it.

"Aren't you going to say good-by to his mother?" she asked.

Marquita shook her head silently.

"The poor old woman means well," said Mrs. James. "Remember, she has a lot to bear; not many of us would be as patient."

"She doesn't need me—she won't miss me. No one will."

"Now, don't talk like that. Mr. Humphrey will miss you, and so will I. He'll be coming after you, and you'll be back with us in a few days. Where will you live in New York?"

"At the Grandon, I suppose—where Humphrey and I stopped. Will you pack my things for me and send my trunks there? I didn't have time." She pressed some money into Mrs. James' hand and went to the door. Her cab had arrived, and the bell was ringing.

In the next installment, in the October issue, on sale September twenty-third, Miss Judson presents New York as it clutches the young woman alone.

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pushed back from a small table. On the table was a small eight-day clock. The time was exactly one. In front of the clock lay a blued revolver, very ugly and naked.

He put his arm around her, very much as a father might. He knew that if he said the wrong thing she would begin to sob. He led her very slowly through the short passage to the library.

"Howard's gone," she said, and that was all. She drew a long breath. She was quivering with suppressed emotion.

"Better go in to lunch," he said. "Don't wait for me. I'll just destroy this."

She was very grateful to him for saying no more.

He stood in front of the empty fire-

place, the yellow envelope in his hand. On the mantelpiece was a photograph of Edwin Booth. Slowly Trent tore open the envelope; and while he did so, he looked at the deep-eyed face of the great actor. Though Trent smiled, there was a hint of tears in his voice. He loved his wife with all his strength; and for a time, anyway, she would be very unhappy. "You and I," he said to the photograph, "have something in common."

Before burning the envelope and its contents, he read once more the terrible threat which had at last brought Evelyn to her knees.

"If you decide not to give me my chance," he had written, "I shall do nothing."

THE HIGHFLYERS

(Continued from page 88)

There was an odor about the chauffeur's clothing which was not that of powder, nor was it exactly that of gasoline. She was sure it was kerosene. What did that mean?

As the man entered the hall, he stumbled, cried out breathlessly and slumped forward in a faint. Cantor and Hildegarde bent over him as Hermann von Essen came hurriedly out of the library. "What's this? What's the matter?" he demanded tensely.

"Nothing to alarm you," said Cantor. "Your chauffeur got burned a little with firecrackers—that's all."

HILDEGARDE switched on more lights as her father and Cantor carried the man to a lounge. She could see that his hands were badly burned, but what was more startling, more significant to her, was that his lips were broken and bleeding, and blood dripped from a gash in his scalp—Injuries not commonly sustained through carelessness with firecrackers.

She peered at her father. Manifestly he was frightened. He seemed to be looking to Cantor in a peculiar manner, not as one looks to a casual guest who is assisting in a minor emergency. Hildegarde wondered at that look. The man jerked convulsively, struggled to sit up.

"Leggo!" he said hoarsely. "Leggo!" Then he saw and recognized Cantor. "Good job," he began, and then stopped suddenly, peering craftily at Hildegarde. "Good job it wasn't anythin' but a little skyrocket," he finished.

Hildegarde was standing tense, white. "There's blood on your coat," she said in a choked voice. "Where were you shooting fireworks?" she demanded, and looked from the chauffeur to her father. Her father was still looking at Cantor.

"Go to bed," he said roughly. "You're in the way here."

"I would go if I were you, Miss von Essen. This isn't a pleasant sight for you."

"I don't suppose that poor watchman in the ambulance was a pleasant sight, either," she said, her eyes on the chauffeur. The man started erect.

"What's that? What you say? What you mean?"

Cantor's hand was on his arm, and Hildegarde's eyes were sharp enough to see that his fingers crushed in savagely.

"Be still. Sit down," he said, and the man obeyed sullenly.

"Go to bed," von Essen said savagely.

Hildegarde was thinking, piecing together the evidence of her eyes and ears: Cantor—what had he to do with this? He seemed rightly to be a part of it. His manner when he spoke to Philip!

"Will you go to bed?" her father said, stepping toward her.

"I'm going," she said unsteadily, almost hysterically. Indeed, she laughed unnaturally. "But before I go—I thought you'd like to know about—another great German victory. They've burned part of the Waite Motor Company—and murdered a man. Murdered a man!" She turned and ran up the stairs to her room.

When she was out of hearing, von Essen turned savagely to his chauffeur. "What made you come here like this, you fool?"

"Where else would he go?" Cantor asked sharply. "No harm's done."

"What's this about—a murder?" von Essen asked shakily.

"Their damn' watchman jumped me—one of them," said Philip. "Before I could let him have it, he landed on me twice. But I got him, and got him good. For heaven's sake, aren't you ever going to do anything to stop this pain in my hands?"

Von Essen was shaking flabbily; his arrogance had disappeared; his cheeks were pasty. "You've got the nerve of a rabbit," Cantor said sneeringly.

Upstairs Hildegarde was listening, listening not to what was being said downstairs, but to another conversation she had overheard months ago—the conversation between her father and a man she had never been able to identify. She was trying to hear his voice now, trying to bring the sound of it back into her ears so that she could listen to it and compare it with Cantor's familiar voice.

CHAPTER XIII

THE summer and early autumn months of the year 1916 were perhaps the least illumined of any period of

Potter Waite's life. It was a period of drudgery, of restless, brooding moods, of kicking against the pricks. There were hours when he felt himself and his work to be futile, when there was imminence of his return to the old life of the bar, the cabaret, the club.

If there were one element of brightness, it was his realization of a change that was taking place in his father. Potter watched with hope, saw the gradual that other men of power throughout the movement of it and read in it a token was changing. Fabius Waite was beginning to think about the United States.

It required a blow touching his own person to jar Fabius from his foundations of Midwestern security and conservatism, but he was too big a man, too able, too sound at the heart to continue to let the personal consideration sway him. He was a man to be depended on to view affairs in their larger aspects, and to weigh them, not with respect to their bearing upon himself and his concerns, but with regard to their effect upon the nation in which he had risen to the summit of prosperity.

The fire in his plant, of demonstrated incendiary origin, gave him the initial impetus. Potter could almost find it in his heart to rejoice at that temporary disaster. Though the criminals were not apprehended or identified, Fabius Waite, correctly enough, laid the fire at the door of German plotters, and he expressed himself with less moderation than was his custom.

"It's an infernal, sneaking business," he said to Potter, "and a government which not only sanctions but deliberately buys and pays for such outrages is not a civilized government. Germany has thrown its decency into the sea."

"But," said Potter to egg his father on, "it's war. Your trucks were going to fight against Germany. Hadn't she a right to destroy them?"

"Yes, openly, with cannon, or in a belligerent country. We are not belligerent. We're serving all the world alike. If they have the idea America will stand for this sort of thing."

"It makes a lot of difference, Father," said Potter a trifle impertinently, "whose dog gets kicked."

"Eh?"
"This thing has been going on for a year or more—but it never touched the Waite Motor Company before."

"Um!" said Fabius, eying his son and taking up his paper. From time to time during the evening he would lower his paper enough to peer over it at Potter for a moment, and at such times it seemed as if he were about to offer some remark. From that hour Potter was able to trace a gradual alteration in his father's attitude toward Germany and toward the war—but most of all toward the United States.

DURING these months Potter worked not only on the designs for his airplane engine, but upon collecting and preserving information of general importance to the manufacturing of complete airplanes in enormous quantities. With all the facilities open to a private citizen he made his inquiries. Twenty million feet of the finest spruce must be

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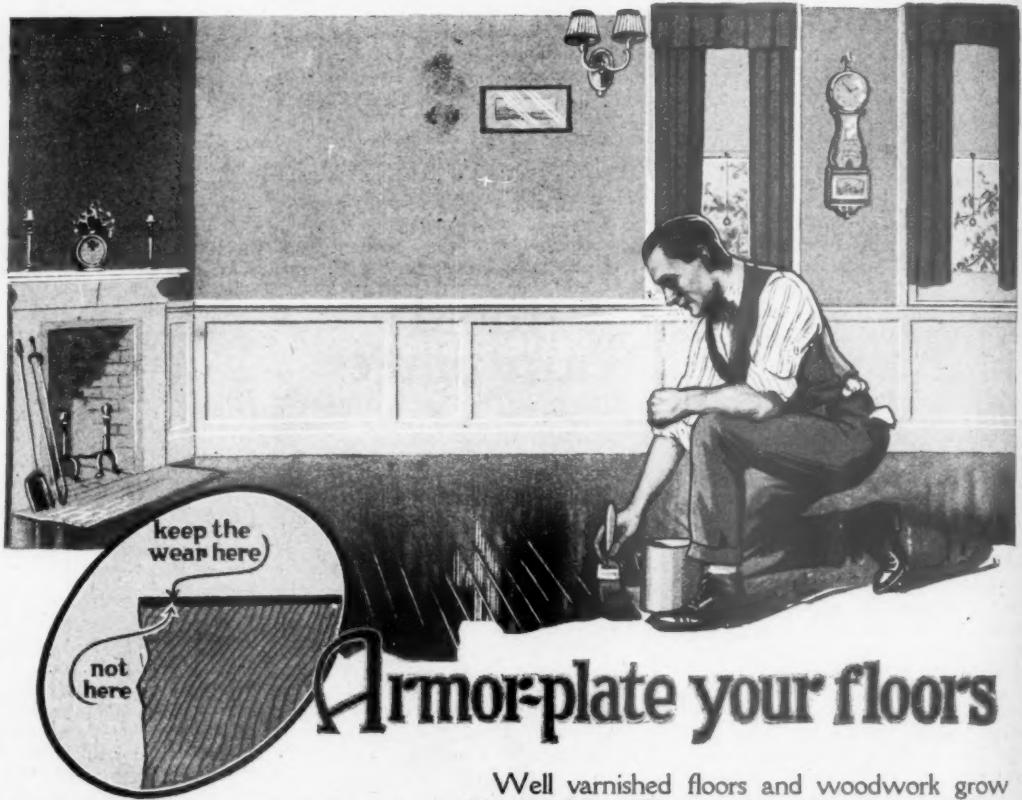
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obtained, in order that four million feet of perfect spruce might be selected and sawed from it for the frames of the airplanes. This alone was a gigantic task. He studied the matter of obtaining linen for the wings, millions of yards of it. The best linen comes from Ireland; it was a commodity of which England could spare little. Perhaps there would appear a substitute. Potter searched for it. Then there was the matter of metal for the engine, and the staggering problem of manufacturing the scores of thousands of such engines which Potter knew would be required for fighting airplanes—engines light in weight, perfect in efficiency, capable of developing a hundred and fifty, perhaps two hundred horsepower. As best he could, he attacked these problems and stood amazed and terrified by the monstrousness of them. It gave him that quivering, frightened sensation one gets from thinking on infinity.

Potter was seeing much of Cantor at this time, and though there were moments when he was jealous of the man, for Potter's nature was a jealous nature, he was glad of Cantor's company. Hildegarde was never mentioned by either of them. By Potter she was never mentioned at any time, and his friends were quick to learn that mention of her in his presence was apt to cause immediate disagreeable consequences. The sound of her name had a curious effect upon him. As one hardy young man said to Hildegarde herself: "I happened to mention you to Potter Waite to-day, and he acted as if somebody had blown him out—like a lamp, you know."

"Bother Potter Waite!" she said; then, after a frowning pause she added spitefully: "You might keep a lot better company."

"Oh, Potter's mild nowadays. Hasn't been on a tear in a year. Don't know what's got into him. Dotty about patriotism and war and airplanes."

"Why doesn't he go across and fight them? I despise conversational courage."

"He stands well with you, doesn't he?" the overbold young man said with a laugh.

The look she gave him somewhat dammed his rashness. She did not speak, but her eyes were enough to nonplus the young gentleman utterly. He made haste to change the subject.

In spite of the seeming obstacle imposed by this young girl, the intimacy between Cantor and Potter not only continued but increased, but beyond a certain point it did not go—and that point was any disclosure of what Potter was doing or how he was doing it. There, though Cantor veered up to the subject obliquely, Potter became filled with reserves. Cantor was unable to say of his own knowledge whether Potter was working on an airplane or a toy piano. One other point is to be noted. The men who worked with Potter in the hangar were not strangers, not picked-up mechanics, but American-born men whom he had known for years and trusted.

In the latter part of the year Potter was visited more than once by officers wearing the insignia of the Signal Corps, Major Craig among them. To these men, at any rate, he was of importance—not so much, perhaps, for what he was doing at the time, as for the potentialities of the

future. The heir to the Waite Motor Company's resources was a man of value. But as 1916 became venerable and neared its end, they were compelled to admit his present consequence.

"I believe," said a young captain to Major Craig, "that young Waite, in Detroit, knows more about airplanes, and more about this country's equipment to produce them, than any other living man."

"Unquestionably," said the Major. "He has made it his sole business to become that man."

"Have you seen his engine?"

"No—only drawings; but he has added valuable ideas. He has studied, and I can safely say that his motor will be watched for with considerable impatience."

LATE in November the new engine was assembled, not completed, probably, as it would be manufactured, but perfected to a point where it deserved a trial. Potter prepared for the test, and when all was in readiness, wired Major Craig.

It so happened that on the morning following the day on which the telegram was dispatched, Hildegarde von Essen went to the rooms over her father's garage to carry certain delicacies to Philip's wife, who was ill. She remained until she heard the car arrive in the garage below; and then, because she did not want to meet the man, be required to talk with him, whom she believed to be a murderer and a plotter, she arose hastily and stepped out upon the stairs. Philip was not alone; a stranger was with him. Involuntarily Hildegarde stopped and listened.

"This'll be easy," Philip was saying. "Softest job we've tackled—no work and no danger. Just set a charge and beat it."

"No watchmen? You have rotten luck with watchmen."

"There's a man sleeps there, but he'll be inside. It's just a wooden shack. Built it for a hangar and then added to it. The boss would like some drawings and papers out of the place, and he's been after them, but he can't make the rifle. He hadn't expected to get busy so soon, but we got a tip that Waite had wired the Signal Corps to come on to watch a test of the engine. Well—there won't be any test to speak of. That engine'll fly without any wings."

"T. N. T.?" asked the other.

"Sure. That does the business."

"To-night, eh? It's a nice place to work, way down on the short there. Nobody likely to be passing."

"He must 'a' picked it on purpose for us," Philip said with a laugh. "Eleven o'clock."

"You'll bring the stuff?"

"Naturally. And you be on hand prompt."

"Who's running this—von Essen or the boss?"

"What comes from one comes from the other lately."

"I'd love to be that watchman," said the man as he moved toward the door. "He'll wake up straddling a cloud."

Hildegarde shuddered. Quietly she stepped back inside the door, stood there trembling a few moments, then opened it noisily and commenced to descend. She nodded to Philip, who looked at her

queerly; then she walked rapidly to the house.

She knew what Potter was doing, remembered those talks with him, his enthusiasm, his awakening to patriotism—and she too was a patriot. That work of his must have been of value; he must have achieved much to demand attention from her father and his companions. She was conscious of a glow of pride, and then was furious with herself for feeling pride. What interest had she in Potter Waite—and if she had an interest in him, or in any honest man, what could come of it?

There was another decision Hildegarde had reached: that she could be wife to no honest American. She, the daughter of a traitor, could make no honorable man the father of the grandchildren of a traitor. She had thought of those children—and of their shame, and of generations of shame that would follow them. The stigma would follow from mother to children to children's children. Nearly a hundred and fifty years had passed since Benedict Arnold sought to betray his country, and his name was remembered, his treachery recalled, where noble men and noble acts had been forgotten. No children of hers should feel the shame that would be their birthright because the blood of Hermann von Essen was in their veins. Such a conclusion is a terrible thing for a girl like Hildegarde, vivid with life, entering womanhood, ripe for love and marriage! But it was there, weighing her, overshadowing her, choking her with its noose of blackness.

Her duty was plain—her duty to her country and to decent citizenship; but opposing it was the demand of blood. To give her father over to the law was unthinkable. Had it been thinkable, she doubted if she had evidence which would stand the test—her unsupported word. But she could not see that crime committed which it lay in her power to avert, and continue to live. It would make her a party to the crime, an abettor of murder. She could give warning; she must give warning—but how or to whom? How without betraying her father?

THERE was but one answer that she could see—to go herself to Potter Waite, to warn him, to beg him to ask no questions as to the source of her information, to trust to his honor and his chivalry. She was confident she could trust him. In that moment she laid aside the pretense that she despised him—but she did not admit that she loved him. She saw him as a man, an American gentleman, trustworthy, brave, dependable. She rested herself on that quality of dependability, felt she could trust herself to it utterly.

She dressed for the street, called for her car, which she told Philip she would drive herself, and started toward Potter's hangar. She did not drive slowly, could not have driven slowly, for there was a certain frenzy upon her, driving her. Her car rushed along the broad street at reckless speed. Scarcely slackening her pace, she careened into the road that led toward the shore and the hangar, crushed on the brakes at the very door and sprang out. She did not hesitate at the door, but snatched it open. Potter Waite was in



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the seat of a newer, smaller airplane than the old machine of their adventure.

"Potter," she cried. "Potter!"

He looked, sprang from the machine and was before her in an instant, his face glorified, his eyes alight with joy.

"Garde!" he said exultantly. "You've come. You've come back to me!"

She shrank from him, put out her hand as though to hold him away. "No," she whispered in sudden terror. "No, not that!"

"But you've come. You've come. I've dreamed it. I've seen you coming through that door." He stopped suddenly, stepped back, and the glory died upon his face. He needed no words to tell him love had not brought her.

"I had to come," she cried. "There's going to be murder—here. They know your engine is ready—that you wired yesterday. They're going to blow it up—"

"What's that?" he demanded. "How do you know I wired yesterday? Who told you? Nobody knows that but myself."

"You mustn't ask. You must promise. I can tell nothing—nothing except that they're coming to-night to blow up this place—to steal drawings if they can."

"Who?"

"German spies. You must believe me, but you mustn't ask me how I know. Promise you won't ask, or try to find out."

"Not ask! What do you mean? Tell me again."

"To-night this building—with your watchman—is to be blown up. Some explosive called T. N. T. It's true. How would I know about your telegram? You must do something. You must stop it."

"I'll stop it," he said, suddenly erect, menacing. He was not startled, she saw, not afraid. He would be ready. She knew it was so he would meet an emergency. "But you," he demanded, "how are you in this?"

"You mustn't ask. Isn't it enough that I've come to warn you—isn't that enough?"

"No," he said, "it is not enough—if you know these plotters. They are fighting against your country. They are dangerous. If you know them, if you can lead me to them, you must do it. Can't you see? It doesn't matter what stands in the way, you must do it—for your country."

"No," she said in terror. "No, I'd rather die. I can't. I won't. I came here to warn you, because I trusted you. I've done all I can. You must not ask more."

"Why?" he asked sternly.

"I won't answer anything. I won't tell you anything more. Oh, can't you see?" She broke out furiously: "I could kill them; I could see them tortured. I'd laugh to see them tortured. I love my country as well as you do, Potter Waite, and I hate them—but I can't tell. I risked everything to warn you."

"Hildegarde," he said, stretching his arms out toward her, "was that why you came—was that all? Wasn't there anything else? Didn't you think about me? I've waited for some word. You know, you've never doubted, that I love you. You've had time to think about that night, and to reason. You know I was right.

You can't be holding that up against me."

Suddenly he was the old reckless headstrong Potter, ruled by impulse, driven by desire. He crushed her into his arms and held her savagely while he kissed her cold cheeks, her lips, her brow.

"You've come," he said hoarsely, "and you've come for keeps. You're mine. You know you're mine."

SHE struggled like an entrapped wild thing, but her struggles were futile. All at once she became limp, flexible in his arms; her tense soul became limp, flexible; she had endured to her utmost, and the breaking-point was reached.

"Hold me closer," she sobbed. "Closer—closer!"

"You came—" he said, and then repeated it over and over again, as if he were suddenly face to face with a divine revelation. "You came!" Then: "Has the time been hard for you, as it has for me? If it had been, you would have come sooner." He lifted her in his arms and held her as if she were a child, and a warm, sweet feeling of comfort and contentment covered her. She was happy with such happiness as she had never known. "Tell me," he said in her ear, "tell me that you love me. I want to hear you say it."

"I love you," she said obediently, as she said it, she realized that it was true, had been true, would always be true as long as life should last.

He laughed boyishly, joyously. "Shall we elope again? Or what shall we do? You mustn't leave me long. How soon can you come to me forever?"

Again the darkness descended upon him, the black noose fastened about her throat. How soon could she come to him forever? How soon? She laughed strangely, answered him with silence, but in the leaden weight of that silence she was saying: "Never—never."

"Put me down," she said in a voice that compelled him to obey. When he stood facing her, his knees trembling, look of such piteousness on her face made him draw a great breath of solitude, she looked into his eyes—looked with steadiness. "I can never come to you, Potter," she said, "—never."

He laughed. "Don't joke, sweetheart. I can't bear that sort of joking now."

"It's no—joke," she said brokenly. "I never want to see you again. I must never try to see me. Never speak of this. I—oh—I can never marry."

"What?" he asked sharply.

"I can never marry any man. I don't know. There are terrible things, frightful things. I am defiled—defiled and I love you!"

She turned suddenly and ran from the room, sobbing and panting as she ran. He did not follow her, but looked at her with wide eyes into which horror was making its way.

"Defiled!" he whispered once; then stood erect, staring straight before him, while one might have counted to a hundred slowly. After that he walked to the door of his private room, stepped inside and shut the door after him.

The next installment of "The High Flyers" will be in the October issue, on sale September 23rd.

well enough yet, to go back? That's all right. The consul can marry us—to-day, if you like. We can live here. And I will nurse you so lovingly and try so hard to help make you well! No matter how long it takes, I'll be ideally happy, just to—

"You don't understand!" he groaned. "And I'd rather bite out my tongue than tell you."

Curly, brutally, he described his coming to the Island—his meeting with Kalani, and all that had since happened. In terrified silence Phyllis heard the story. For a moment she shrank from this man as she had shrunk from him when he had told her of his tuberculosis—but only for a moment, because she had grown since then, had grown and developed and had learned to read her own heart. Almost at once she knew she loved him, even the more dearly, for what he had gone through. Whatever he had done, whatever he had been, she knew she must always love him. But she hated this wicked native woman, hated her with a flaming gust of hatred that surprised herself.

"So you see how I'm placed," Rance ended his wretched recital. "I owe her everything, and I can't desert her. You remember when you and I went to hear Farrar in 'Madame Butterfly'? You said *Pinkerton* was a dog, to throw over the trusting little Jap girl who loved him so. Lots of American men have done like that. But I'm not one of them. All American men with native sweethearts are not curs. I'm not one. There's only one white course I can take. I've got to stand by the woman who has stood by me. I can't leave her for a woman who—"

"For a woman who has loved you and grieved for you and cried for you, night and day!" she flashed, stirred to sudden anger by his comparison of herself with this odious native. "I've done all that! And all the time my heart was bleeding for you, you were making love to—to Oh, it's unbelievable, Rance! Here, I come across the world to comfort you and make up to you for what you've suffered. And I find—this! Pah! Men are beasts!"

"One minute!" he said with a sternness that silenced her. "Before you insult the woman who has saved my life, and before you call me a beast, let's look at the other side of it. When—"

"There is no other side!" she stormed. "There is!" he contradicted. "Kalani has played the game fairly and squarely and—yes, *cleanly*, according to her people's standard. And that is more than you did. You turned from me with a qualm of disgust, when I was a hopeless invalid. She took me to her heart and brought me to life again. You—"

"I don't care to hear—"

"You celebrated my departure out of your life," he went on, unheeding, "by a series of jolly flirtations with other men. You did not even honor me by a brief space of mourning, such as you would have given to a dead brother or uncle. Have you behaved any better, according to feminine standards, than I have behaved, according to masculine? Have you? Be honest. Have you? And have you behaved one tenth as well, accord-

ing to your own ideals, as Kalani has behaved, according to hers? What have you done, or been, to give you the right to call me a beast and to draw aside your skirts from Kalani?"

HE spoke with heat, nervous reaction and Phyllis' scorn stinging him to angry defense. At first Phyllis listened in lofty disdain. But bit by bit the sneer crept to curl her lip and the glint of contempt died in her eyes. Her newly acquired self-knowledge was coming to her aid—or to her undoing—and was awakening in her a tardy sense of justice.

Rance paused, a little ashamed of his vehemence. For a space neither of them spoke. Then, impulsively, Phyllis put out her hand.

"Who am I, to judge you or—or her?" she said brokenly. "I'm sorry I spoke so. And—some of the things are true, that you've just said. Most of them are, I'm afraid. I wish they weren't, for they make me so ashamed! I—"

"I didn't mean to make you ashamed," he answered contritely. "I only—"

"But I am," she insisted. "I am ashamed. And I forgive you for everything you've done—just as I beg your forgiveness for the abominable way I behaved. Sha'n't we let bygones be bygones, beloved? We both have much to forget and to forgive. If you can do it, I can. Sha'n't we put it all behind us? Sha'n't we face our new life together with a clean slate? Sha'n't we remember only that we love each other, that we have been brought together at last, and that nothing can ever part us any more? Sha'n't we?"

"You forget," he said gently, his eyes sick with pain. "You forget we can't face our new life together. That's the hell of it. We must face it apart."

"No!" she cried in sharp rebellion. "No! No!"

"Yes," he muttered.

"No!" she exclaimed again. "We are not going to be parted. Why, Rance, I love you! You are all my heart and soul and future. I'll devote every minute of my life to making you happy—forever and ever. And you love me too. You're not going to let a foolishly quixotic idea of honor stand between us and our love, and wreck both our lives! Why, you can't."

"I'd give my own life not to have to do this," he said abjectly, the sweat of anguish standing out on his face. "But there isn't any other way. It's got to be good-by, dear."

"It hasn't!" she sobbed. "I'm not going to lose you. Oh, you're so absurd! These natives aren't like real people. They don't understand what love is. They have no soul. We'll offer her a lot of money—"

"Stop!" he commanded.

BUT her blood was up. She was fighting for all she held dear. Coming closer, she caught him by the hands.

"Rance, you sha'n't throw away your life like this. If you don't value me, at least value your career."

He laughed shortly.

"Yes," she reiterated, "your career. Do you mean to say you've no interest in following up such a success as your book has made?"

"My book?" he echoed. "Why, I'd forgotten all about the thing. Was it ever published?"

She stared at him now in genuine astonishment.

"You haven't even heard?" she asked incredulously, "Why, Rance Doulton, your book is the biggest literary hit of the year. Everybody is talking about it. It has taken the critics and the public by storm. People are proclaiming you as the coming novelist. The sales had passed the hundred-thousand mark, before we left the States. You've blazed the way for a great future, Rance. A great future! All the critics say so. You've opened a new vein, they say, in literature. Why, the whole world is waiting for your next book! You're a celebrity. I—"

She paused abruptly to let the sense of her words sink in. Rance's face had flushed redly. Her news of his book had hurled open the long-shut flood-gates of ambition. His book! The book over which he had toiled so eagerly—from which he had hoped so much! It was a success. A golden career lay before him. He drew a deep breath. Then his eye dulled again.

Kalani! He could never uproot her from her native soil and transplant her into his own old-time life. It could not be done. And racked and sick with renunciation, he held his ground.

Phyllis read his swift changes of expression. Now she broke down and wept—wept bitterly and aloud, like a child whose hope is dead. Rance stood above her, a lump in his own throat. Twice he half stretched forth his arms as though to gather her to him. His face was a mask of agony.

"Phyllis!" he murmured wretchedly.

The girl took her hands from her eyes. Pale, yet strangely calm, she faced him. Into his memory, as he saw the new light in her eyes, came the old proverb:

"When human nature can endure no more, God sends peace!"

The last of her selfishness, her narrowness, her spoiled-child waywardness had fallen from her in this hour of trial. She was no longer a girl but a woman.

"You are right, dear," she said very softly, "and I won't try to persuade you against your conscience. I will go back home without you. And I'll try to live out the rest of my life as though you were to be pleased by what I do. But—I wonder if you would mind, very much, if I had just one glimpse of your home, before I go? Just a glimpse, from the edge of the jungle," she pleaded as he frowned, "just one. I think you know I won't make a scene. I only want to have a mind-picture of the place, to carry away with me—for I shall be thinking of you always, Rance, beloved. And I want to be able to remember how your surroundings look. Please don't say no."

HE considered, for a few seconds. He had not the heart to deny the request. And its granting would be the easier, since Kalani had arranged to go for the day on a visit to relatives some miles inland. She was to have set out immediately after his own departure. Long before this time she would be on her journey.

"Come!" said Rance, briefly, leading

How Mother Saved \$100 on My Wedding Clothes

The Story of a Secret That Is Too Good to Keep

By ELEANOR HARRISON

Bob and I are back from our honeymoon in Maywood. Mother and father were out to spend the evening with us last night and while father and Bob were enjoying their dinner cigars in the den, mother suddenly said:

"Eleanor, I have a secret. Let's go up in that cozy back room and be comfortable while I tell you about it."

So we went upstairs and sat as we used to at home—mother in a big, upholstered rocker and I on a low Turkish chair at her feet.

When we were comfortably settled, the first thing Mother did was to put her hand inside her waist and taking out something, she smiled and laid it in my hand. When I looked down, I saw it was a crisp, yellow \$100 bill!

"No, mother," I said, handing it back to her, "I don't want you to give me that! You have already given me too much and I know how easily you can use the money yourself. No, I couldn't take it and feel right!"

"But it's really yours, Eleanor," she protested. "And that's only part of my secret!"

But wait—I'm getting ahead of my story. Bob and I had planned to be married last May. When war was declared, Bob—the dear boy—wanted to enlist, but the doctors in Chicago rejected him on account of a slight valvular trouble with his heart. So Bob came back and we expected to be married in a few weeks, when his savings were swept away by the failure of a private bank and we had to start all over to save for our little home.

I kept my position at the office and also opened a savings account—with mother—to-ward the purchase of my trousseau. At noon or other times when I could spare an hour or two, I would meet her by appointment at Harper's and she would help me decide which suit, dress, coat or other garment I wanted. Then I would run back to my work and leave it to mother to pay the bill, see that alterations were made and that the package was properly addressed for delivery.

I had decided to buy all my clothes ready-made. There were no good dressmakers nearer than Chicago and since I was buying "piece-meal" as I accumulated the money, this would have meant a trip to the city for fittings or some other purpose every few days. So we confided in Mrs. Merritt—head of the ready-to-wear department at Harper's and an old friend of mother's. She was more than helpful and I really thought I was doing very well.

When we were married three weeks ago, when the wedding day arrived, my trousseau was complete with attractive, stylish and becoming dresses, suits, waists and lingerie. I was delighted with everything! They seemed so much prettier at home than they had in the shop—not the least bit of a "ready-made" look about them when I tried them on in my room.

All the girls told me that my wedding dress was the prettiest thing they ever had seen. And when I had shown them all the new dainty things that made up my trousseau they couldn't believe that I had bought everything ready-made right in town. On our honeymoon, too, I could not help observing the admiring glances cast on my gowns and suits.

So—to come back to last night—when mother said the \$100 was really mine, I felt sure that some mystery about my wedding clothes was going to be cleared up. But I had absolutely no idea of the real truth when mother drew my head close to her and began to tell me her secret.

"In a way I suppose I deceived you, Eleanor," she said, "but I prefer to call it a 'surprise.' Not one mother in a thousand could do what I did and really keep it a secret, because less than one girl in a thousand would ever be too occupied to attend to her own wedding finery. Several times I was sure you would guess my secret. But if you suspected, you never let me know. So I'm going to confess at last. I made every dress, suit, skirt, waist and piece of lingerie in your wedding chest myself!"

I knew of course that mother was telling me the truth—and yet I could scarcely believe it!

"But, mother, you never told me you could sew at all—let alone sew like that! Those are the most wonderful clothes I ever had! Why have you always let me think you couldn't sew any more than I could?"

"Well, I couldn't, dear," she smiled mysteriously, "until last Fall. I had never made anything more difficult than an apron in my life! But I had wished so many times that I could make pretty, stylish dresses for you and for myself! Of course at my age I couldn't go into a school or shop to learn."

"But one evening I sat in the library at home, reading a magazine when my eye sud-

denly caught a line which read: Learn Dressmaking and Millinery at Home! Partly because I did so wish I could and partly out of curiosity, I read the article clearly through. It told the story of an institute of domestic arts and sciences that had developed a new and practical method by which any woman or girl—no matter where she might live—could learn right at home to make her own clothes and hats.

"That night before retiring, I filled out the coupon at the end of the story. I figured it wouldn't cost me anything but the postage. And it meant merely that I wanted more information. Next day I mailed it on my way downtown, wondering whether there could really be a home-study plan by which a woman as ignorant about sewing as I, could learn to 'design, draft, cut, fit, make, drape and trim even the most elaborate dresses.' That was what the article promised.

"WELL, in just a day or two the postman brought me a handsome booklet, telling all about the Woman's Institute and the success of thousands who had already joined the institute—wives and mothers, business women, girls at home or in school, girls in stores, shops and offices. It also contained many voluntary letters the institute had received from them praising its work and telling how much their courses had meant to them! Many of these letters were from mothers who expressed their delight in finding that they could learn in their own homes, at their own convenience, to plan and make stylish and becoming garments of all kinds for themselves and their children. And they could have them at a mere fraction of what such clothing would cost if bought in any other way.

"Many others wrote that the Institute had made it possible for them to succeed in dressmaking or millinery as a business. Lots of these women, I found, were older than I and others were girls of fifteen or sixteen years. Their homes are in all parts of the world. The majority, of course, live in some part of the United States but there are hundreds in Canada and in foreign lands—all learning dressmaking or millinery at home just as successfully as if they were together in a schoolroom! Yes, and many others are learning cooking—the selection, preparation and serving of healthful, appetizing food at one-third less cost—which the Institute is teaching by the same proven methods.

"In the face of all the evidence, I couldn't help believing that I could do what thousands of other women had done so successfully!

"So, without telling anyone, I joined the Institute and took up Dressmaking. I could hardly wait until the first lesson came. And when at last it was in my hands, I went upstairs to my room and opened it almost breathlessly—like a girl with her first love-letter! I turned a few pages and looked at the wonderful pictures! There are nearly 2,000 of them in the dressmaking course alone and they illustrate perfectly every step that could possibly cause anyone difficulty. I learned eighty-three different stitches and seams in the first two lessons."

"WHAT did father think of the plan?" I interjected.

"That is one of the few things I ever kept from him," said mother. "I didn't want him to say 'I told you so' if it didn't work out all right.

"I kept my lessons and my work hidden in my bedroom closet and studied them only while you and father were at business. But the course can easily be finished in a few months by studying an hour or two a day. I found I couldn't help making rapid progress. The teachers take such a deep personal interest in your work! And it must be pretty hard to make mistakes, for the textbooks foresee and clearly explain everything.

"The delightful part of it is that almost at once you begin actually making garments. Why, after the fourth lesson I made that pretty waist you thought I bought in Chicago!

"And so it went all the way through the course. I learned how to copy models I saw in shop windows, on the street or in fashion magazines. Every step was as clearly explained that the things which I had always thought only a professional dressmaker could do, were perfectly easy for me! Best of all—the lessons taught me how to develop style in a garment and add the little touches that make all the difference between ordinary clothes and those of becoming charm and distinction!"

"WELL, one day, the idea of proving the skill my course had given me, flashed into my mind. I had just completed the lesson giving complete directions for planning and making a bride's entire trousseau. I had plenty of time and wanted to do it for you as a complete



Drawing by Will Grefe

They seemed so much prettier when I tried them on in my own room

surprise. I wouldn't have thought it possible myself at the time—to save so much money on just your wedding clothes!

The very first day we went shopping, I made up my mind how I could do what I had planned and keep it a secret from everyone at home. But I would have to let one person share it with me—Mrs. Merritt. She has been in charge of the ready-to-wear department at Harper's for years and we have been friends from girlhood. After you had gone, I told her about it. She agreed to try on you whatever garment you selected and fit you. Then after you had rushed away as you always did, I enlisted her aid in buying right there in the store the duplicate materials and trimming necessary to exactly copy the model.

"So I began work in earnest—and I didn't have the slightest trouble! Just once I got confused about your wedding dress. But I wrote to Mrs. Picken, Director of Instruction of the Woman's Institute, who had been so considerate all through my course, and she gave me just the help I needed on the point that bothered me.

"And so," mother finished, "that is my 'prise,' Eleanor! I made every stitch of material and trimming and actually saved \$100 on your outfit alone! Furthermore I have saved nearly \$75 more by making over into garments of the latest mode, a lot of out-of-date dresses and suits of my own—all through my membership in the Woman's Institute! Isn't it wonderful?"

"WONDERFUL!" I exclaimed, "why mother made clothes in all the world ever looked like those you made for me! And you have spoiled me—I shall never again be satisfied with the ready-made kind!"

So I have told you mother's secret—just as she told it to me. I've already arranged to join the Institute myself. And surely, what mother did—in saving \$100 on just my wedding clothes—any woman can do over and over again on clothing for herself and her family!

Why not find out how the Woman's Institute can help you? The way is easy—simply write or fill out and mail the convenient coupon below. And you will receive—without obligation—a handsome booklet telling the full story of this great school which has proven such a wonderful blessing to women all over the world.

WOMAN'S INSTITUTE

Dept. 20J, Scranton, Penna.

Please send me one of your booklets and tell me how I can learn the subject marked below:

Home Dressmaking Cooking
 Professional Dressmaking Millinery
 Teaching Sewing

Name (Please specify whether Mrs. or Miss)
 Address



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"AMERICA'S ANSWER"

Second U. S. Official War Feature



See our boys go over the top at Cantigny!

GENERAL PERSHING himself sent to this country much of the material included in "America's Answer"—the second Official Government War Film, now playing at the Geo. M. Cohan Theater, New York; the Forrest Theater, Philadelphia; and the Majestic Theater, Boston.

"America's Answer" will also be presented in the following theaters on the dates mentioned:

Brooklyn, Academy of Music, Aug. 26-31. Cincinnati, Grand Opera House, Sept. 1-7.

Providence, Opera House, Sept. 2-7. Baltimore, Ford's Grand Opera House, Sept. 2-7.

Bridgeport, Park Theater, Sept. 9-11. Worcester, Worcester Theater, Sept. 12-14.

Albany, Harmanus Bleecker Hall, Sept. 16-21.

New Haven, Woolsey Hall, Sept. 23-25.

See our boys building a 3-mile pier in a French port; assembling

American locomotives; baking bread—each loaf stamped with the company's trade-mark.

See huge heaps of Yankee shoes being salvaged—quantities of worn-out underwear being put in shape for our boys by motherly French women; American motor trucks swung off ships and freed from their crates by Austrian prisoners.

See American soldiers going over the top at Cantigny—the French tanks and flame-throwers in action—the capture of German prisoners.

This stirring war film is a fitting sequel to "Pershing's Crusaders," which is now appearing in thousands of motion-picture theaters throughout the country. If it hasn't been shown in your town, ask your theater manager to get it.

ANOTHER feature-picture every American will surely want to see is "The Bridge of Ships"—a two-reel film telling a graphic picture-story of the ship-building achievements of the U. S. Government.

★ ★ ★

ALSO look for the Allies' Official War Review, a digest of current activities of the American, French, British and Italian troops on the Western Front. Shown each week at your favorite theater.

★ ★ ★

IS YOUR BOY over there? Or perhaps your brother or husband? Do you want to see how he is living—what he is doing and how he is doing it? His life in the new environment is vividly portrayed in these impressive war films prepared by Uncle Sam for the folks who have to stay at home.

The exposition of Captured War Trophies will be held in the leading cities of the United States. Watch for announcements.

"PERSHING'S CRUSADERS" distributed by First National Exhibitors' Circuit, Inc.
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION, George Creel, Chairman
Through the Division of Films, Charles S. Hart, Director, Washington, D. C.



the way toward the opening of the jungle-trail at the beach's landward edge.

Without a word Phyllis followed him. He walked slowly, pausing every now and then to help her disentangle her white dress from brier or vine. They said nothing as they moved along, and their feet were noiseless on the soft earth of the path. Finally Rance came to the narrow mouth of the trail, where it began, at the clearing. He was about to stand aside, to let Phyllis step past him, when he saw a tall young native—a man—enter the clearing from the left.

The native stepped cautiously out into the open space and whistled. At the signal a native girl came running joyously out of the hut and flung herself into the whistler's arms.

"Kalani!" gasped Rance aloud.

The native girl heard. Slipping from the man's grip, she spun around to face Doulton. For a fraction of a second she cringed like a whipped dog. Then she straightened to her full lithe stature and

laughed aloud. The game was up, and she was minded to cringe no more.

"This is the man I love," she called jeeringly to the astounded Rance and pointing at the grinning native. "The man I love, real and true! Native girl get much praise, much fine reputation, if she got white-man husband. That why I take up with you. Gives me great name on island. But I sick of it, because this man want me, now, and I want him!"

"Kalani!" sputtered the incredulous Rance.

But the girl laughed the shriller. Rance glowered at the native man, and his fist crept to the fishing-knife at his belt. But a warm little hand slipped into his, and a loved voice whispered rapturously into his ear:

"Can't you see what it means, heart of my heart? It means you're *free!* Free to come home—with *me!*"

"Phyllis!" shouted Rance in stark exultation.

Two days later the big white steam-

ship carried Rance and Phyllis northward—to the real world and to their heaven-blest future together.

Behind an overturned boat, on the beach, at the jungle-edge, crouched a native girl. She had been watching the white ship sink low on the hazy sky-line. She was weeping bitterly, and she swayed back and forth in a paroxysm of mortal grief.

A native man glided forth from the jungle and touched her. At the touch she shrank as from a snake. In some resentment the man demanded:

"Why do you start away from me like that? Two days ago you paid me an American dollar in silver when I met you running from here through the jungle like a hurt doe—to come to your hut and to kiss you, where he could see."

"It was because I *had* just come from here," she sobbed. "From here, whither I had followed my man to his boat—from here, where I—where I had seen and—heard!"

A CERTAIN SOMETHING

(Continued from page 75)

bosom and can overlook an occasional egg in the room,—boiled, not fried,—and a handkerchief or two pasted on the window, knowing your intentions are the best; and if you *should* come back—"

Marion shook her head. "I sha'n't come back this time," she said confidently. "You see, in a couple of weeks I expect to be"—she hesitated and flushed becomingly—"going home."

COULD a certain executive of the Colosseum have seen Marion, well-dressed, confident, radiant and starry-eyed, going forth to dine with Abner that night at a certain famous restaurant, he might have thought twice before issuing the ultimatum which had closed her connection with the huge theater. Somewhere in the girl's nature existed the making of an actress, for when she assumed the costume of the part she had set herself, she gave no half-hearted performance of the rôle.

She impressed even the unimpressionable maître d'hôtel to the extent that he personally established the pair at a highly desirable table not too far from the dancing-floor nor too near to the orchestra.

"That chap recognized you," said Abner as they settled themselves. "Did you notice how worried he was for fear you weren't going to like the table? I suppose he's seen you on the stage." Abner was innocently delighted at this tribute to Marion's professional prestige.

"Perhaps," she assented with the languid interest of one sated with public recognition. "It's quite possible. Everybody goes to the Colosseum one time or another."

"Or maybe you're in here so often that he knows you by sight," Abner continued.

"No, I don't come in here so often—at least not so very often," she said truthfully. "You see, there are so many places in New York that are just as popular."

"You don't know how I appreciate it,

Marion," Abner said, later, "giving up so much of your time the way you do when I come to town. Compared to the chaps you know here,—the actors and critics and Wall Street fellows,—I must be pretty dull company."

There was no reservation in her tone as she replied:

"Abner, I don't know a single actor or critic or Wall Street man in all New York that I'd rather be dining with to-night than with you."

"Honest?" he said eagerly. "How about the one that sent you those orchids you're wearing? But maybe he isn't any of those things."

Marion looked down at the flowers on her breast.

"No," she said gayly, "the person who sent these isn't an actor or a critic or a Wall Street man either."

Which statement was entirely within the bounds of veracity, for the blossoms had been sent by a Sixth Avenue florist with whom she had bargained for flowers to be delivered to her daily. The petted favorites of the footlights are reputed to be constantly in receipt of floral offerings from their numerous admirers, and Marion was not one to neglect so important a detail of her stage-setting.

"Sure you're not wishing he was here in my place, Marion?"

She laughed. "Don't be jealous, Abner! Why, I don't care if I never see him again as long as I live!"

"It's a wonder to me you're not spoiled to death," he continued, "—everybody sending you flowers and candy and things and taking you to places. But you're not! Why you're just as glad to see somebody from your home town—"

"You'll never be just 'somebody' to me, Abner," she said softly.

THEY lingered a long time over their dinner that night. Marion drank in eagerly every item of the simple annals of Barlow's Falls—who was married and

who was dead and how Bud Taylor's oldest boy was in the bank now, how the Smiths had moved and the Browns had parted; and she grew positively breathless over how Harriet Ann Martin's twins came near to getting drowned in the mill-race.

The maître d'hôtel sought them out once more and bent solicitously over their table.

"Madame is pleased, I hope," he inquired with professional fervor. "Everything is all right?"

Marion answered with exactly the correct degree of courteous condescension.

"Quite all right. Everything is always very nice here." And she dismissed him with a nod that a duchess might have copied.

Abner beamed. "See! he said triumphantly. "I told you he recognized you!" Then they danced.

"You're a wonderful partner," said Abner. "I'll bet you dance a lot."

Marion's mind flashed back to the Colosseum and its ballet-master whose words were more biting than *Simon Legree's* whip, and the weary, weary miles her tired feet had traveled on that vast stage at his behest.

"Yes," she said, "I've danced every night but Sunday all season!"

"Every night!" echoed Abner. "Well, I don't see how you New Yorkers stand the pace!"

FOR two blissful weeks Marion the butterfly fluttered in the sunshine. She reveled in the luxury of the little apartment; she lunched here and dined there; she piloted Abner to the two or three theaters the ear'y summer had left open; and they went on voyages of discovery to Frolics and Follies and Roofs, to Greenwich Village and Chinatown and all the countless places where the City and the strangers within the City's gates make merry.

And in the pauses of her gayety Marion

dreamed dreams and saw visions in which this motley pageant of New York had no part. Now the end of the fortnight had come, and Abner had not spoken. Half a dozen times he had seemed to be on the brink of an avowal, and half a dozen times the words had died on his lips. But to-night Marion felt sure it was going to be different. It was Abner's last evening in New York; to-morrow he would be on his way back home. And only the city-weary, the sick of heart, the failures, like Marion, know the agony of longing that may lie in those words "back home."

The orchestra was playing very softly a plaintive little air, and the muffled murmur of the streets floated up to the roof-garden of the Astor. Far below, the milky way of Broadway shamed in splendor the Milky Way that shone above them in the heavens.

"It's been a wonderful two weeks," said Abner absently.

Marion nodded.

The plaintive little air sobbed itself to sleep, and the sprightliest of sprightly ragtime took its place. It seemed to rouse Abner from his contemplative mood.

"There's something I want to tell you, Marion. I've tried two or three times, but somehow—" His voice trailed off again into silence.

She waited a moment, then prompted him gently.

"Well?"

"You know, it's been terribly lonesome for me out home—no family, nothing but the store." He paused again.

"Yes, Abner," she said softly.

"I guess I can show you better'n I can tell you. He produced a tiny leather box and pushed it across the table to her. On its white velvet bed a diamond caught the reflection of the many-colored lights.

Marion gazed, fascinated.

"Oh, Abner, how lovely!" she breathed.

"It is pretty, isn't it? They told me at Tiffany's that that platinum setting with little diamonds round the big stone was fashionable. You like it, don't you?" He asked anxiously.

"Like it!" Her eyes were almost as dazzling as the diamond.

He sighed.

"That's a weight off my mind. I wanted you to like it because you know about such things. Put it on."

She slid the glittering circle on her finger, and as she did, there rose a prayer in her heart, a prayer of thanksgiving that her loneliness and homesickness were at an end, that she was done forever with struggle and shame and pretense, a prayer that she might be worthy the love of this kindly, simple, decent man. There were tears in her eyes as she held her hand out to him across the table.

"See," she whispered, "it fits me perfectly."

"Yes," he answered, "you and she are just about the same size."

FOR a moment Marion did not speak. Abner's attention was focused on the ring, and so he missed the expression on her face. The beat of the ragtime veiled a curious quality in her voice when she said:

"Who—who is it?"

"Annabel Bentley. Her folks came to the Falls just before you left. They're

dead now, and Annabel's a frail, delicate little thing—no more fit to earn a living than a kitten. That's what first kind of attracted me to her—she was so helpless."

He stopped. The ragtime rent the air with a wild crescendo and finished with a crash.

"She wanted me to get you to help pick out the ring so's I wouldn't make any mistake. Somehow I didn't like to. You see, she doesn't know how I—used to feel toward you."

He stopped again. Marion stared silently at the glittering bauble on her finger. After a moment he went on:

"It might sort of hurt her to know how crazy I was about you. Why, Marion, after you came here, I used to pray that you wouldn't make a success. I thought if you failed, you'd be satisfied to come back to Barlow's Falls—and marry me. Every time I came on here, I was hoping that you'd had some little setback or that things weren't panning out right, so you'd sort of turn to me. But when I saw how well you got on, and the way you lived, and how wrapped up you were in your career, I came to know it wasn't any use."

Again a silence fell between them for a moment. Again Abner was the one to break it.

"I guess I'd better tell Annabel. They say honesty's the best policy, in the long run."

Marion lifted her eyes from the ring. "What's that you said?" she demanded.

"Why, nothing but the old saying 'Honesty's the best policy.' I'm going to tell her. She'll know there's nothing to worry about now it's all over and done with!"

"Over and done with," repeated Marion mechanically. She drew the ring from her finger and laid it gently on the white cloth between them. "Over and done with."

MARION was walking eastward on Forty-second Street. It was very hot; she was very tired; and it was a long way from the San Bernardino Hotel on Broadway in the lower Sixties to the shabby rooming-house awaiting her on Lexington Avenue in the upper Forties.

The traffic-policeman at Sixth Avenue scowled at her as she blindly tried to cross before he swung the semaphore from "Stop" to "Go," and the little park behind the library seemed scowling too—its spring greenery dusty and soiled and blighted, like a drunken drab rising from the gutter. Its benches were deserted except by a few derelicts, flotsam and jetsam of humanity, dirty, unkempt, forbidding.

The lavender man scowled as he chanted "Lavender, sweet lavender, sweet lavender!" And Marion scowled back at him as she passed. Lavender! Its faint acrid odor followed her, poisoning her thoughts as she plodded eastward. It brought to her mind sodden purple flowers, rain-beaten into the earth of new-made graves, and yellowing packets of letters from lovers who had proved faithless, and faded finery for weddings that had never taken place. Lavender! Its odor seemed to hold all the bitterness of vanished hopes, dead dreams and vain regrets.

THE landlady in person answered Marion's ring. She seemed even fatter, more disheveled, more melancholy than a fortnight earlier.

"So here you are back again, after all!" She fanned herself with the corner of a dirty apron.

Marion glanced up the endless untidy stairs; she breathed the staleness of the air, reeking with reminiscence of bad cooking; she mentally recoiled from the landlady's fat frowns.

"Yes, back again," she said flatly. "My room?"

"It's vacant."

Marion picked up her bag and her bandbox.

"Wait just a minute." Hardness displaced the melancholy in the woman's tone. "I'm sorry, Miss Lee, but I've had to raise the price on that room; everything's gone up so terrible. It'll be a dollar and a half more a week than you paid before."

Marion thought of the single ten-dollar bill that remained of her savings.

Dumbly she shook her head.

"Well, of course if you can't pay it, Miss Lee, there's others that can, and if a poor widow don't look out for herself, nobody else's going to look out for her. Personally you and me's been very congenial, and I hate to lose you, but business is business! Good-by."

Marion was halfway down the steps when she was arrested by:

"Oh, Miss Lee, there's a letter for you. Come this morning." The landlady fumbled in the pocket of the dirty apron. "I guess it's nothing but an ad." She produced a heavy white envelope. "They get 'em up very well now, with no printing, so's you'll be sure to open 'em thinking they're letters."

"My dear Miss Lee," Marion absently read aloud, "I happened to be at the Astor Roof this evening and sat at a table not far from your own. You will perhaps forgive me for watching you closely, when I tell you I saw in your face a certain something that convinced me of my mistake in concluding you could not play the rôle you read for me sometime ago. The engagement is still open, and I shall be glad to see you at eleven to-morrow. —Yours, B. Rinaldo."

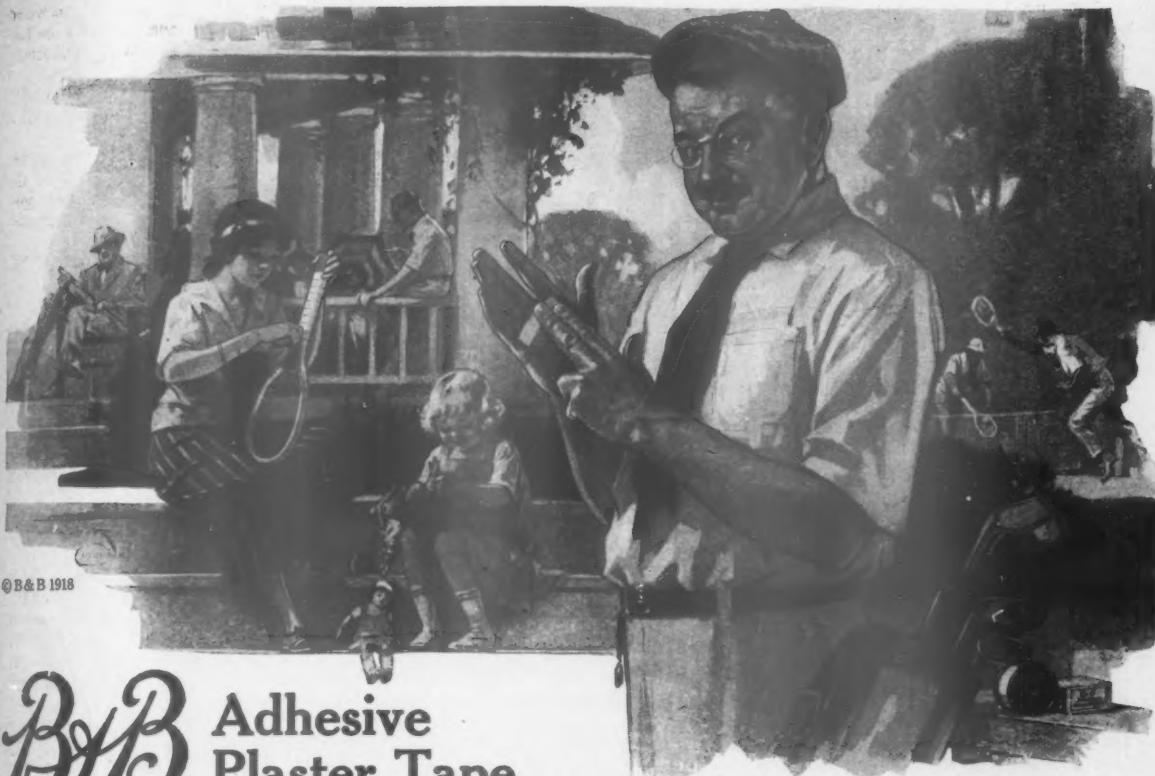
The landlady gasped fatly, in sheer wonder.

"Rinaldo!" she exclaimed. "Are you sure, dearie? He don't produce nothing but dramas—they don't use no choruses!"

She took the letter from Marion's fingers and read it feverishly.

"And his plays never think of running less'n a year on Broadway! Listen, dearie, I'll tell you what! You take the room at the old price till you get settled in the engagement; then you can pay me the difference. Lemme take your bag and your hand-box upstairs for you. I want you should look at the first floor front as you go; it'll maybe be more homelike for you later." She started up the stairs, but doubt halted her on the third step. "You're sure you can hold the job down?"

"Yes, I'm sure I can do it—now!" the girl answered listlessly. "Playing a part like that one isn't difficult. It's only that you've got to have"—her voice broke a little, but she threw her head up and finished gamely—"a certain—something!"



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